

THE HISTORY

100<sup>th</sup>  
ANNIVERSARY

of the Laying of the  
Corner Stone

PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH

JULY 26

1892

BRIDGETON.  
N.J.

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A history of the laying of  
the corner stone of the

Allen H. Brown







# HISTORY

OF THE

## Laying of the Corner Stone

OF

### The Presbyterian Church,

✓  
BRIDGETON, N. J.

*Presbyterian Church*  
100th Anniversary

## 100th Anniversary,

July 26th, 1892.

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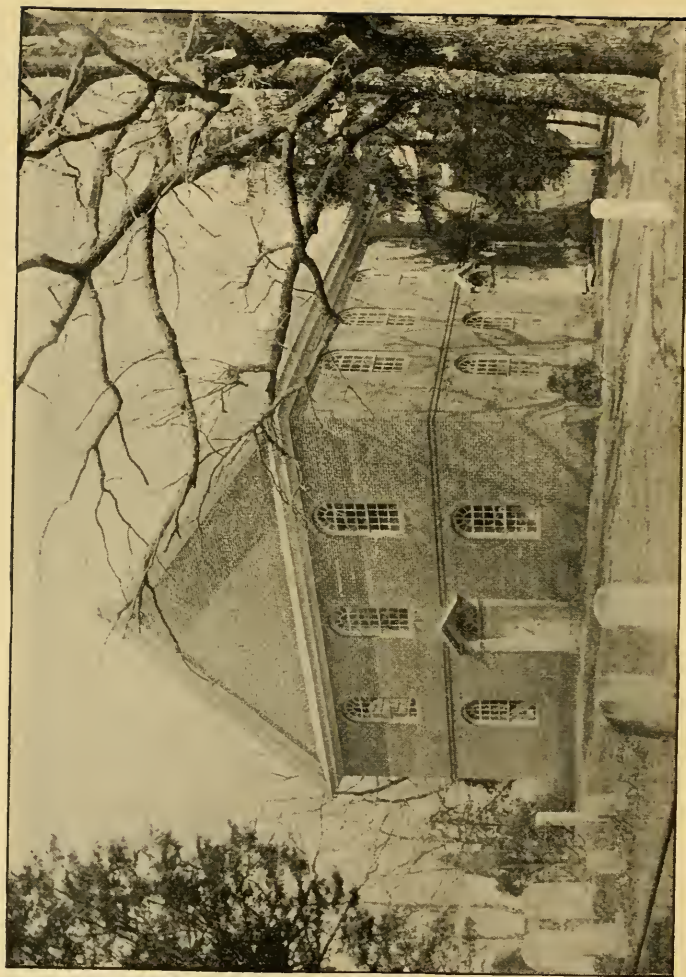
BRIDGETON, N. J.











OLD PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

## PREFACE.

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The celebration of the Centenary of Bridgeton Presbyterianism was an event that will never be forgotten. The elaborate preparations made, including every detail of the programme, reflected credit on the business management of the Centennial Association. But the success was even greater than the most sanguine had dared expect. The day dawned bright and beautiful, but so warm that the mercury climbed steadily upward till by noon it touched ninety-eight degrees. Yet Bridgeton's enthusiasm was nothing daunted by the torrid temperature. Early in the morning the old church yard became the scene of life and activity, and as the day wore on, multitudes sought the historic spot to join in the festivities of the occasion. Almost every town in South Jersey was represented, and many people from a greater distance came to renew old associations and revive sacred traditions.

A large platform had been erected under the spreading trees of the churchyard, where seats had been provided for the speakers and singers. The auditorium in which the people assembled, was unconsecrated, but not less hallowed than Westminster Abbey. Its walls were the open sky, its roof the rustling leaves of intertwined branches; its background the church of the father's, now a century old; and participating with the living as interested spectators seemed to be the more than seven thousand sleeping ones whose graves lay beneath our feet.

Besides papers of local interest, eloquent addresses were made by distinguished visitors.\* The music rendered by a large and well trained choir was inspiring. The ladies served a sumptuous luncheon at mid-day. In the old church was given a rare exposition of historic curiosities collected by the indefatigable zeal of the Committee on Relics. And so the day passed, everything combining to promote its success, and no accident marring its pleasure.

An occasion of such significance, it is felt, should have some permanent memorial. At least the historic results of the day should be gathered up and fittingly preserved. This thought has taken shape in this little volume. In it are collected the principal papers read and a few of the many letters from absent friends. It is believed that while such a book will be of special interest to Bridgeton Presbyterians, it will not be without value to a wider circle of readers. We recall the fact that the earlier periods of our history as a church belong to the town itself not less than to ourselves. Like the branches of a tree, all the churches and institutions of Bridgeton centre about this common stock. This fact has given a peculiar unity and homogeneity to our city. May this continue and develop as the years go by.

\* These are not all found in this volume because it was deemed necessary to exclude all matter that is not strictly historic.

Presbyterian Centennial Association,  
OF BRIDGETON, N. J.

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ORGANIZED, APRIL 21, 1892.

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**OFFICERS.**

REV. SYLVESTER W. BEACH, *Pres'dent.*  
 REV. HEBER H. BEADLE, } *Vice Presidents.*  
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 WEST CHURCH:—Charles S. Padgett, Henry W. Elmer, M. D., Daniel Elmer, Wm. B. Nixon, Chas. B. Moore.

**SUB COMMITTEES.**

ARRANGEMENTS:—David McBride, Henry A. Jorden, Jonathan Elmer, Eli E. Rogers, Rev. W. J. Bridges, Daniel Elmer, Judge James R. Hoagland.  
 INVITATIONS:—Rev. H. H. Beadle, Rev. W. J. Bridges, Rev. S. W. Beach, James J. Reeves.  
 PROGRAMME:—David McBride, Rev. W. J. Bridges, H. A. Jorden.  
 FINANCE:—Eli E. Rogers, Daniel Elmer, Robert M. Seeley.  
 RE-UNION:—William B. Nixon, Charles Reeve, Alex R. Fithian.  
 MUSIC:—Henry W. Elmer, M. D., Eli E. Rogers, Rev. S. W. Beach.  
 PRINTING:—Alex R. Fithian, Charles Reeve, Charles S. Padgett.  
 RELICS:—Dr. Joseph Sheppard, Dr. Chas. H. Dare, Robt. B. Potter.

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## PROGRAMME.

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MORNING SESSION—IN THE OLD CHURCH YARD, BEGIN-  
NING AT 10 O'CLOCK.

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1. PRAYER, Rev. Leonidas E. Coyle.
2. HYMN,—“ 'Tis by Thy strength the mountains  
stand.”—*Tune, Rainbow.*
3. SCRIPTURE READING.
4. THE HISTORY OF “THE CENTENNIAL  
ASSOCIATION.”  
Rev. Sylvester W. Beach.
5. ANTHEM. By the Centennial Choir,  
Mr. Thomas R. Janvier, Director.
6. BRIDGETOWN BEFORE 1792.  
The laying of the Corner Stone, and the  
History of the Church until the Dedi-  
cation of the Building in 1795,  
Col. Wm. E. Potter.
7. HYMN.—“Lord, what a thoughtless wretch was I.”  
*Tune, Greenwich.*
8. HISTORY OF THE CHURCH.  
From the Pastorate of Rev. Wm.  
Clarkson, M. D., to that of the Rev.  
John Kennedy, with a sketch of Rev.  
Jonathan Freeman.  
Rev. Henry Reeves, Ph. D.

9. ANTHEM. By the Centennial Choir.
10. REV. SAM'L. BEACH JONES, D. D. AND HIS  
TIMES. Rev. Allen H. Brown.
11. HYMN.—"Oh, where are kings and empires now."  
*Tune, St. Martins.*
12. HISTORY OF CHURCH MUSIC AND HYMN-  
OLOGY IN BRIDGETON,  
Mrs. Rob't. DuBois.
13. IMPROMPTU REMARKS BY VISITORS.
14. L. M. DOXOLOGY.
15. BENEDICTION.

DINNER was served on the grounds  
of the West Jersey Academy, opposite  
the old church.

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AFTERNOON SESSION—IN THE OLD CHURCH YARD, BE-  
GINNING AT 2.30 O'CLOCK.

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1. HYMN.—"While shepherds watched their flocks  
by night."  
*Tune, Sherburne*
2. PRAYER.
3. ANTHEM. By the Centennial Choir.
4. HISTORY OF THE SECOND CHURCH AND  
ITS PASTORS.  
Rev. Heber H. Beadle.
5. HYMN.—"Why do we mourn departing friends."  
*Tune, China.*



## 6. HISTORY OF THE FIRST CHURCH.

From the Pastorate of Rev. Caspar  
R. Gregory, D. D. to the present time,  
Rev. Sylvester W. Beach.

## 7. ANTHEM. By the Centennial Choir.

8. HISTORY OF THE WEST CHURCH,  
Rev. William J. Bridges.9. HISTORY OF THE WEST JERSEY ACADEMY,  
Prof. Phoebus W. Lyon.10. HYMN.—“All hail the power of Jesus’ name.”  
*Tune, Coronation.*11. HISTORY OF PEARL STREET MISSION AND  
EAST BRIDGETON CHAPEL,  
Mr. P. Kennedy Reeves.12. “PROGRESSIVE PRESBYTERIANISM,”  
Mr. Rob’t. C. Ogden, Philadelphia.13. HYMN.—“Lo what a glorious sight appears to our  
believing eyes!  
*Tune, Northfield.*14. CENTENNIAL ODE,  
Mr. John Reeves, Philadelphia.

## 15. IMPROMPTU REMARKS BY VISITORS.

## 16. BENEDICTION.

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EVENING SESSION—IN THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH.

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REV. MOSES D. HOGÉ, D. D., L. L. D.,  
Delivered an Oration on “Presbyterian Principles.”  
The Centennial Choir rendered special music.

**Historical Statement by Rev. Sylvester W.  
Beach, President of the Presbyterian  
Centennial Association.**

*Ladies and Gentlemen:*—We are here to-day to celebrate an event of stirring interest to all of us in general, and to Bridgeton Presbyterians in particular. This day, one hundred years ago, an assembly was gathered on this very spot, and with fitting ceremonies the corner stone of a Presbyterian Church was laid. By a common impulse we have been moved to celebrate the day. The history of the movement that culminates in the event of to-day, I am called upon briefly to rehearse. The Session of the First Church at their regular monthly meeting, Feb. 2d, 1892, took the following action, after a thorough discussion of the subject:

*Resolved*, That in the judgment of this Session, the Centennial of Presbyterianism in Bridgeton, which occurs this year, should be suitably observed, and we hereby call upon the Sessions of the other two churches to unite with us, if the matter commends itself to their judgment, in taking steps to arrange for a suitable celebration.

Resulting from this call, a joint meeting of the three sessions was held, and it was decided to call together the congregations to consider the question. This meeting was held in the First Presbyterian Chapel, April 21, 1892. After a general discussion of the subject, it was unanimously resolved to hold a Centennial Celebration at some time during the year, and an Executive Committee was appointed to fix upon the date, and go forward in arranging the details of the Celebration. An Executive Committee was constituted.

They decided upon July 26th as the date of the Celebration, as the time most significant and suitable, it being

the day of the laying of the corner stone of the old Church.

Sub-committees on the following subjects were appointed: Arrangements, Invitations, Programme, Finance, Re-union, Music, Printing and Relics; and a Committee of ladies.

The Work of the Executive Committee is now practically completed, and they present to you to-day as a result of their labors, the program which is now before you. To all our people the warmest thanks are due for their kindly co-operation throughout, in the work of preparing for this day. We welcome you one and all, to a participation in the festivities of this glad day. A note of sadness mingles with our gladness, for the surroundings of this place remind us that the past has recorded irretrievable losses. Especially do we mourn that one, the most interested of all perhaps in the success of this occasion, was summoned from us ere the day dawned to which he was looking forward with much rejoicing. I refer to our beloved friend, Dr. J. Barron Potter. But the occasion has more of sun-light than shadow. We are full of thanksgiving for the glorious history which has given so noble a fame to Bridgeton Presbyterianism. We are also able to rejoice in the present; for we exhibit in our denomination a strong and unshaken line in the battle against the world, the flesh and the devil. We are a united, prosperous and growing Church. We likewise contemplate the future without misgivings. The past makes us sure of the days to come. We welcome this day in the confidence that the future has in store for us far greater things than our past history can tell.

"Not backward are our faces turned,  
But onward to our Father's House."

Address of Col. W. E. Potter, on "Bridge  
Town Before 1792."

*Mr. Chairman, Brethren and Friends:*—The ceremonies of this day, I am sure, will be of interest to all in presence. For many of us, indeed, this interest is colored by sadness, for within the shadow of these sacred walls, and under the over-arching foliage of these venerable trees, lie the graves of our forefathers; nay, of more than these, the graves of those knit to us by the closest and tenderest ties of kinship and of love.

Within the area of this cemetery are buried the mortal remains of nearly four thousand persons, a number thirteen times as great as the population of this village when the corner-stone of this building was laid. The mystic chords of memory stretch from their graves to almost every heart and hearthstone within the limits of this county; and beyond it, wherever the restless foot of adventure has led our citizens to wander.

These walls are written over, these ancient pews are deeply engraven, by the boyish hands of our kinsmen and friends, now alas, many of them, long since dust and ashes. Some of us, mere prattlers by our mothers' sides, have here attended divine service; others have been scholars at the Sunday School; many others of us, from childhood, have been accustomed to come here while the last glories of departing day lingered in the West, and among these monuments stained with the sunset of a hundred years, to meditate upon the brevity of life, the certainty of death.

Under these circumstances, and with these tender memories, pressing upon us, that heart must indeed be flint-like which is not this day thrilled with profound emotion.

It is a solemn and saddening reflection that of all of the

8000 inhabitants of this county of whose birth we have authentic record, living when this church was erected, but one survives.

Born upon the 10th day of May, 1792, the venerable Dr. Enoch Fithian, of Greenwich, still lives; lives in the recollection of a well-spent life; lives in the affections of the whole community; lives in sure hope of an early entrance into life and happiness which will be eternal.

May the prayers and songs of praise of this day be wafted to his retired dwelling, and breathe a new benediction through his silver hairs.

#### BRIDGETON BEFORE 1792.

The history of this church is practically coincident in time, with that of the Government of the United States. In 1792, the Revolution had been ended nine years; the weary vexations and unsatisfactory period of the Confederacy had passed, and upon its ruins had been laid, broad and deep, and broader and deeper than even its builders knew, the foundations of our present government. The young men who fought the battles of the war had become the leading men in every community throughout the country. The matchless financial ability of Hamilton, aided by the strong and sure support of Washington, had brought order out of chaos in the finances of the new nation; and the government, like a noble ship, had borne its way through the icy and stormy seas of adversity, and almost of despair, and with favoring breezes was now sailing in smoother waters.

The thrill of a new prosperity began to be felt along all the nerves of commerce and trade. There is evidence tending to show that these influences reached even the small and remote hamlet then known as "Bridge Town."

By an actual enumeration of its inhabitants made in

1792, the population of "Bridge Town" was 300. There were probably not more than fifty dwelling houses in the village.

The late Judge Elmer in his county history states, that nearly all the dwelling houses in existence in 1800 can be identified, and he enumerates 32 upon the east side of the river and 37 upon the west side, and the total number of 69. That portion of the village west of the river was parcel of the township of Hopewell; and that east of the river was parcel of the township of Deerfield. Cumberland County was set off from the County of Salem by an act of Assembly passed January 19, 1747-1748. It was named after the Duke of Cumberland, son of King George II, who had recently gained the victory of Culloden, and thereby permanently established the House of Hanover upon the throne of Great Britain.

The original location of the village was doubtless due to the fact that it was at the head of navigation and the contour of the banks of the river was such as to make it practicable to bridge the stream.

For many years, and even within the memory of those now living, the village was called, locally, "The Bridge;" At an earlier period it was known as "Cohansey Bridge."

In 1792 there was little wealth in this community, and no one man of large property, except two or three persons who held title to lands, which afterward enriched them or their descendants.

Nearly all the families raised, killed, and cured their own pork and beef, and spun their own clothing and bedding, which was afterwards woven either by themselves or by persons who followed the business. Their fuel was wood cut in the adjacent forests, and their light was furnished by candles made in the family.

Water was obtained from wells easily sunk in the porous soil. There was an absence of very many of what are now considered not luxuries but necessities of life. In many houses there were no glazed windows, but only apertures cut in the walls of the houses and closed by shutters. The journal of a young lady who visited in Bridgeton in 1786 records that she travelled to Philadelphia in a private carriage, that the journey took two days, and that the party stopped the first night at the Pine Tavern, a well known Inn; and she complains of the scanty bed-clothing, and that the windows were not glazed, and had no shutters, only boards nailed up, and these an inch apart. The highways, the country over, were horrible. The journey by stage from New York to Boston occupied in good weather six days, and in bad weather nine days. Persons travelling from New York to Philadelphia took leave of their friends as those do who now cross the ocean. Travellers over the same route were often obliged to wait two or three days at the Battery in New York, before they ventured to cross to Paulus Hook on the Jersey shore. Bath-rooms, outside of the large cities, at least, had not come into use.\* The use of anthracite coal for fuel, of illuminating gas, of the telegraph, the telephone, of steam locomotion, of the electric light, of canned fruits and vegetables, of matches, of the numberless arts and devices of modern life, had, of course, not been discovered. The process of vaccination had not been developed, and whole families in Bridgeton as elsewhere, inoculated with the virus of small-pox, were quarantined for weeks, until the period of infection had passed.

The use of anæsthetics and of antiseptics was unknown, and the methods of surgery as of medicine, viewed



in the light of the present day, were rude if not barbarous. Fever patients were saturated with mercury, until not infrequently their teeth, and sometimes even their tongues fell out, and a cup of cold water, even where the thirst raged most fiercely, was considered fatal.

It was a cruel age. Our ancestors brought with them their English traditions. They were familiar with the history of the "Bloody Assizes," during which after the rebellion of Monmouth, the infamous Judge Jeffreys, in one circuit, caused to be condemned and executed over 300 persons; they recalled the later rebellions of the pretender in 1715 and 1745, and the confiscations and executions attendant upon them.

These memories and the condition of public sentiment in those days, led the Fathers, at the close of the Revolution, to treat the Tories with very great severity. Their property was confiscated; their lives were threatened. Hundreds fled to New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, other hundreds to England; and there lingering out a brief existence, died far away from home and kindred. In South Carolina, upon returning to their homes after the war, many tories were shot upon the spot, without justice and trial. In northern New Jersey they were stripped naked, tarred and feathered, and driven from the State.

Even in Bridgeton, a tory, who is said to have been one of the guides for Simcoe's column to the infamous massacre at Hancock's Bridge, venturing after the war to visit the inn kept in the house still standing upon the south-west corner of Broad and Giles streets, was so violently threatened, that the then sheriff of the county, father of some still living, was forced, in order to save him from injury, to send him out of the town.

Nothing shows more forcibly the improved civilization



and Christian sentiment of this day, than at the close of the late war of the Rebellion, which cost not less than half a million lives, and a treasure so vast that the mind shrinks from calculating it, no man of the conquered rebels suffered for his treason in body or estate, by the action of the United States.

The condition of the jails the country over in 1792, was almost beyond belief. They were nurseries of the most open and flagrant vice; and a distinguished historian has stated that some of them at least, would compare unfavorably with the Black hole of Calcutta.

In 1792 the criminal laws of England, like those of Draco, may be said to have been written in blood. Over one hundred crimes, from stealing a pocket handkerchief to high treason were punishable with death; some of them by tortures and indignities worse than death. Our fathers inherited this tendency to severity in their criminal laws. In 1787, in our neighboring State of Delaware, there were twenty crimes to which the death penalty was annexed.

In Massachussetts there were ten such crimes. The tread mill was always going. The shears, the branding iron, and the lash were never idle for a day. In Philadelphia the wheelbarrow men still went about the streets in gangs, or appeared with huge clogs and chains hung to their necks. In Rhode Island for many offences, a perpetual mark of shame was imprinted upon the culprit. The counterfeiter was punished with the loss of a piece of his ear, and a large letter C was deeply branded in his forehead. In our own State, fortunately for its fame, these degrading punishments did not exist, and but four crimes involved the death penalty.

From the boundary of New England southward, the

code duello was in force, and Hamilton, its most distinguished victim, although in the last writing from his pen, he placed upon record one of the strongest arguments against it, fell upon the heights of Weehawken, in obedience to its inexorable law, as by a singular infelicity did his young son, upon the same ground, one year previous.

It was an age of grave and even stilted manners. This is shown by all contemporaneous history, and especially by the letters of the period. The address and ending of a letter, even between intimate friends, in those days were matters of serious import. The etiquette of the day, was precise and complicated, and during Washington's administration was a frequent cause of complaint. The grave manners of the period were much enhanced by the dress then worn. Professor McMaster, in his admirable history, thus describes it:

"A gentleman of the last century, if he were a man of fashion or of means, wore a three-cornered cocked hat heavily laced. His hair was done up in a cue, and its natural shade obscured by a profusion of powder. His coat was light colored with diminutive cape, marvellously long back and silver buttons engraved with the letters of his name. His small clothes came scarce to his knees; his stockings were striped; his shoes pointed and adorned with huge buckles; his vest had flapped pockets; his cuffs were loaded with lead. When he bowed to the damsels that passed him, he took half of the sidewalk as he flourished his cane and scraped his foot.

Nor does the dress of the lady as she gravely returned his salutation, and courtesied almost to the earth, seem less strange to us.

These were the days of gorgeous brocades and taffetas, luxuriously displayed over cumbrous hoops which flat-

tened before and behind, stood out for two feet on each side; of tower built hats, adorned with tall feathers; of calash and musk-melon bonnets; of high wooden heels fancifully cut; of gowns without fronts, of fine satin petticoats and of implanted teeth."

The customs of 1792 differed widely in other respects from those of to-day. Neither the civilization or the religion of that period, had evolved the modern doctrine that either the vending or the use, within temperate limits, of intoxicating liquors, constituted a moral crime. Brandy, whiskey, rum and wines were sold by the measure at every country store as freely as molasses or sugar. The decanter stood upon every sideboard; and the Presbyterian minister of the day was accustomed to take his dram with his entertainers both before and after service.

The inn-keeper was one of the principal persons of the community, and often not only a member, but an officer of the church. As there were no public halls, the principal gatherings of every rural community were held at the village inn; and these were the chief places where the revolutionary committees in each locality were accustomed to assemble.

As the means of transportation and accommodation were limited, it was an age of great hospitality. Newspapers were few and difficult of access, and strangers and travellers were welcomed, in rural neighborhoods, as bringing something of the news from the outside world.

The journal of the young lady above referred to records, that after service in the Court House, where "Parson Grier" preached, "a very large company" sat down to tea at the house of the gentleman where she was visiting, and the whole journal shows that this occasion was but a sample of the hospitality of the times.

The same hospitable customs which then existed here, although they have generally disappeared in the North, still remain in parts of Virginia, and perhaps in some of the other Southern States. They are one of the earmarks of rural and sparsely settled communities.

In 1792, imprisonment for debt still existed, and for the debt of a trifling sum, the creditor, by execution, could seize the body of his debtor, and confine him in the county jail, among the most vicious criminals.

Public hospitals and asylums for the sick, the infirm, and the insane, were very rare, if indeed they existed at all, and the evidence is abundant that oftentimes the treatment of those afflicted persons in almshouses, jails, or by those to whose care they were farmed out, was extremely neglectful and cruel.

By the census of 1790, the population of the country was ascertained to be somewhat less than four million. These were scattered along and near the Atlantic sea-coast, from Maine to Georgia. Kentucky was admitted to the Union in 1792, and by that time Pittsburg was a small town. Settlements had been begun in the fertile valleys east of the Alleghanies, and some thousands of people were in motion down the Ohio, or had already arrived at the new settlements in Ohio and Kentucky. Save the settlements indicated, and perhaps a few small hamlets at different points on the Mississippi, the area of the United States in 1792 was a vast wilderness, inhabited only by various tribes of nomadic savages.

Slavery still existed, but the number of slaves in this community was small, and in our State this system of servitude was always of the mildest and most humane type.

No newspaper was regularly published in Bridgeton

until some years after the beginning of this century.

This was an eminently patriotic community. During the Revolution, at least two full companies were raised in this vicinity, which joined the Continental Army. One of these, commanded by Capt. Richard Howell, was the 5th Company of the 2nd Battalion, First Establishment of the New Jersey Continental troops. The other, commanded by Captain Joseph Bloomfield, was the 7th Company of the 3d Battalion. It is a singular fact that each of these officers, after the Revolution, became Governors of the State. At several times during the war, fully one-half of the militia of this country was in actual service.

#### THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CONGREGATION AND ERECTION OF THE CHURCH BUILDING.

It was in the age and by a people having the habits, customs, traditions and sentiments which I have thus endeavored to point out, that the congregation which erected this building was organized. The majority of the Presbyterians of this County were the descendants of Presbyterians, of English lineage, who about the beginning of the 18th century emigrated from Connecticut and Long Island to this county; but there were some influential families of that indomitable Scotch-Irish race, which more than any other has sustained and advanced the cause of Presbyterianism in the United States.

The New England Presbyterians established what was called the "Cohansey Church," of Fairfield, which at first independent, as were the churches of Connecticut, united with the Presbytery of Philadelphia, in 1708.

There is no record of any actual settlement at "Bridge Town" at so early a date as this. Indeed there was no

recorded survey of the lands there upon the east side of the river until 1716, when the West Jersey Society re-surveyed and recorded its eleven thousand acre survey; and it was not until 1754 that Alexander Moore, who had acquired title to parcel of these lands, had the plot of a town surveyed. The survey to Ebenezer Miller, which covers the lands upon the west side of the river from Oak street on the north to a considerable distance south of Vine street, was made in 1749. A brick Court House was built in 1759 in the middle of what is now Broad street, opposite where the Sheriff's house now stands. The hamlet grew so slowly, however, that at the outbreak of the Revolution there were probably not more than 150 inhabitants.

Both Greenwich and Cohansey at that time were places of much more importance than "Bridge Town."

In 1792, the population, as has been stated, was about 300. The majority of the inhabitants, and those of the most influence, were on the west side of the river, and the chief business centres were at the corners of what are now Broad and Franklin, and Broad and Atlantic streets.

These facts fixed the location of this church upon the west side. Up to the time of the erection of this building, the Presbyterians of Bridge Town attended church sometimes at Greenwich, sometimes at Cohansey or Fairfield, and at intervals held services in the Court House.

In 1770 an unexecuted will of Alexander Moore was discovered on file in the Surrogate's office which purported to bequeath a tract of land situate on the north side of Commerce street above where Pearl street now is, for the sole use of a Presbyterian Meeting House, and a legacy of fifty pounds towards the construction of a building. In 1774 an effort was made to raise by subscription

sufficient funds for this purpose, but the mutterings of and the out-break of the Revolutionary War ended this project. The question of the erection of a Presbyterian Church was again agitated in 1788, and in 1789 several public meetings were held, at which the subject was discussed. Jonathan Elmer offered as a location for a building a tract of land somewhere near the point, now the southwest corner of Oak and Franklin streets. John Fithian, M. D., offered a lot at the south-east corner of Broad and Giles streets.

These locations were much opposed by the residents upon the east side of the river.

Subscriptions, however, were set on foot, and a committee was appointed to manage the business, and agree upon a site. This attempt, however, was unsuccessful. The names of this committee are not known.

At length, in 1791, through the influence of Dr. Jonathan Elmer, Col. David Potter and General James Giles, Mark Miller, the son and heir of Ebenezer Miller, who was a Friend, agreed, in consideration of a promise made by his father, to give the lot upon which this building stands, "To be used, occupied, and enjoyed by the inhabitants of Bridgetown forever, for the purposes of a burying ground for all said inhabitants generally, and for erection thereon a house for the public worship of Almighty God."

This lot contained about two acres, and comprises the north eastern portion of the present cemetery.

Upon receiving the promise of Mark Miller as above stated, Jonathan Elmer and David Potter called a general meeting of the inhabitants of the town, which convened in May, 1791, when the site above mentioned was fixed upon, and Jonathan Elmer and Eli Elmer were unani-



mously chosen to take a deed for the same in trust for the uses above mentioned. Afterwards it was thought proper to add David Potter and James Giles to the number of trustees.

It is worthy of note here, that of these trustees, Jonathan Elmer had been a member of the Revolutionary Congress and of that of the Confederation, and was up to March 3, 1791, Senator of the United States; and David Potter, James Giles and Eli Elmer were soldiers of the Revolution.

In conformity with his promise, Mark Miller conveyed the land above mentioned, January 11, 1792, and other conveyances have been made from time to time, so that the title to the area of the cemetery, as shown of record, is as follows:

The details of the title are here omitted. About ten acres of ground are now comprised within the limits of the cemetery.

As soon as the "Donation Ground" was secured, subscriptions were opened for the purpose of building a church upon it, and about £600, (or \$1,600) were subscribed, materials were purchased, and the contracts made. The work was begun in the spring of 1792.

July 26, 1792, "the foundation stone was laid by a number of the gentlemen of the town, with the usual ceremonies."

There is no other evidence of what occurred upon this occasion than this brief record.

September 27, 1792, the roof was raised, and in December of the same year, the roof was enclosed and all the subscription money was expended.

The resources of the inhabitants of the town applicable to the purpose having been thus exhausted, it became



necessary to devise some new method for raising money sufficient to complete the building. At that period, the use of lotteries in aid of public charitable and religious purposes was quite common, both in England and in the United States, and the minds of those having the business in charge, readily turned to this method of relief. Ebenezer Elmer, M. D., afterwards known as General Elmer, was a member of the Assembly in 1793, and it was doubtless through his influence that an act of the Assembly was passed as follows:

“An act to authorize the subscribers to the building a Presbyterian Church in Bridge Town in the County of Cumberland, and to authorize the Subscribers to the Building a Presbyterian Church at Middletown Point, in the County of Monmouth, to erect Lotteries for the Purposes therein mentioned.

SEC. 1. BE IT ENACTED by the Council and General Assembly of this State, and it is hereby enacted by the authority of the same, That the subscribers to the building the Presbyterian Church at Bridgetown, in the County of Cumberland, be and they hereby are authorized and empowered to raise by way of lottery a sum not exceeding two thousand dollars; and the Subscribers to the Building of the Presbyterian Church at Middletown Point, in the County of Monmouth, any sum not exceeding Fifteen Hundred dollars, to be appropriated by them towards building and completing the said Churches.

2. And be it further enacted, That the Subscribers to the building of each of said Churches shall choose by a Majority of Voices, three managers of said Lotteries, who shall be on oath for the faithful Discharge of their duty; which oath any of the Judges or Justices of the Peace, in and for said counties of Cumberland and Monmouth, are hereby authorized to administer; and in case of the Death, Removal, or other Disability of any or either of the Managers so to be appointed, others shall and may, in like manner, be chosen to supply the place or places of him or them so disabled.

Passed at Trenton, May 22, 1793.

Neal & Lawrence's Laws, p. 835.

It is a noteworthy fact, that within less than five years afterwards, by the act entitled: "An act for Suppressing of Lotteries," passed February 13, 1797, Patterson's Laws 227, all lotteries are declared to be common public nuisances, and the setting up, opening or drawing lotteries was among other things, made punishable by a penalty of \$2,000.

The lottery was drawn in 1794. Upon what scheme it was drawn, or who all the managers who conducted it were, is not now known. The sale of the tickets was quite a task. They were widely distributed throughout the country.

In a letter written by Col. David Potter to his brother-in-law James Ewing, of Trenton, under date of October 17, 1793, he states, among other things:

"I now take the liberty of enclosing fifty-six (tickets) from No. 241 to 296, including both, which I hope you may be able to dispose of.

"Dr. Ebenezer Elmer has fifty also, which I hope that he can sell to the good men that passed the law for us. I fear that we shall not be able to draw quite as soon as mentioned in the scheme, but the greater part are disposed of, and the managers told me yesterday that they only waited to hear from South Carolina of the success of those that were sent there to Mr. Hollinshead, Ramsay and others, which they made no doubt are disposed of."

A copy of a letter in the possession of a gentleman in this city shows that several tickets had drawn prizes of \$5.00. It states, one man had drawn five five dollar prizes, which were remitted to him, "less 15 per cent reduction." The minutes of the trustees of the Church, under date of January 12, 1795, give the only information upon this subject, as follows:

"Settled the accounts of the managers of the lottery for the Church, and on a final statement of their accounts, and of all monies paid by them in building the church, there appears a balance due to Jonathan Elmer, one of the managers, of 14 dollars 20 cents.

The desired amount of money having been thus secured, the work upon the building was resumed, and continued until May 17, 1795, when it was so far finished as to be fit to occupy.

Sunday, May 1795, the church was "Solemnly dedicated for the public worship of Almighty God," by the Rev. John Davenport, then pastor of Deerfield Church.

Sunday, Dec. 13th, 1795, the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was administered in this church for the first time, by the Rev. William Clarkson.

While the new church was in process of erection, divine services appear to have been held regularly in the Court House.

The Presbytery of Philadelphia, convened at Bridgetown for the first time, April 16, 1793, and Jonathan Elmer was appointed to attend it, on behalf of the Bridgetown congregation. Previous to this time, however, there were grave doubts in the minds of those interested as to whether the number and the means of the residents of the town would enable them to maintain a house of worship. This feeling of doubt prevailed for some time and an effort was made to unite with the Presbyterian Church of Greenwich. April 30, 1792, a general meeting of the inhabitants of Bridgetown and its immediate vicinity was held and a plan proposed for a union with the Greenwich Church. A committee was appointed for this purpose, but the plan was not approved by the Greenwich congregation, and was therefore abandoned.

It was then deemed advisable to commence the regular organization of a separate church and congregation, by applying to the Presbytery of Philadelphia for recognition.

Several meetings were had for the purpose of deliberation upon this subject, and October 14, 1792, it was

agreed that such application should be made to the Presbytery at its next session. Jonathan Elmer was appointed to attend the meeting of Presbytery with an application as follows:

*To the Rev'd Presbytery of Philadelphia:*

GENTLEMEN:—The inhabitants of Bridge Town and its vicinity have hitherto experienced great inconvenience in having no House for worship in or near the Town.

It is a County Town central in its situation, and contains near 300 inhabitants who are rapidly increasing in number. After repeated efforts we have now a fair prospect of succeeding in building a church in the town. It is already nearly enclosed, and will probably be completed the ensuing season.

Our next object is to prepare for the stated preaching of the gospel in it. Having a predilection for the Doctrine and Discipline of the Presbyterian Church in America, we wish to become an acknowledged member of that Church. We have therefore deemed it the most orderly mode of procedure to make known our particular case and circumstances to the Rev'd Presbytery within whose bounds we are situated, and to solicit their approbation and assistance in the measure. We have appointed the bearer hereof, Jonathan Elmer, Esquire, our Commissioner for that purpose. He will lay before you the application agreed upon by us, and wait for the result of your determination upon the subject

We are, Rev'd Gentleman,  
Yours, &c.,

Signed by order and in behalf of the meeting,

DAVID POTTER, Chairman.

Bridge Town, Cumberland County,  
State of New Jersey, October, the  
13th, 1792."

The original of this letter is in the possession of the venerable Rev. John Hall, D. D., of Trenton.

Doctor Elmer attended the meeting of Presbytery and accomplished the object of his mission.

October 17, 1792, the Presbytery adopted a minute as follows:

"Through Jonathan Elmer, Esquire, their Commissioner, application was made by the inhabitants of Bridgetown and its vicinity, in the County of Cumberland, and in the State of New Jersey, to be erected into a distinct congregation. After mature deliberation upon the subject, Presbytery unanimously agrees to grant the prayer of said application, and do hereby constitute and form the above mentioned inhabitants into a Distinct Congregation by the name of the Congregation of Bridge Town.

At a meeting of the congregation, August 25, 1794, it was unanimously agreed to prosecute a call "as soon as may be for Dr. William Clarkson." It was further agreed that a salary of £175 (\$365.50) be given him between the two congregations of Bridge Town and Greenwich. It was further agreed that the congregation of Bridge Town give a separate call to Dr. Clarkson for half of his time, and to pay him half the salary above mentioned, £87, 10s 0d (\$182.75), and that he supply the two churches by preaching one sermon every Sabbath in each of them, through the year if agreeable to him, and approved of by the Greenwich Congregation.

At this meeting also, Jonathan Elmer, David Potter and Ephraim Seeley were appointed as a committee to meet a committee of the Greenwich Church to converse upon the subject of calling and settling Dr. Clarkson in the two congregations.

A call was soon after accordingly prepared by this congregation for one-half of Mr. Clarkson's time; and by the Greenwich congregation for one-half.

Both calls were presented to him at the Presbytery in Philadelphia, and were by him accepted October 20th, 1794.

November 14, 1794, he was ordained in the Greenwich Church, as pastor of the two congregations. The Rev. Samuel Stanhope Smith, D. D., President of Princeton College, preached the sermon upon this occasion.

It should be noted that the Rev. Mr. Clarkson's title of Doctor, was that of medicine, not of divinity. He was a very skillful physician, and at one time possessed a lucrative practice in the city of New York, which he abandoned to enter the ministry. He appears to have served the two congregations faithfully and acceptably for several years, but the congregations of both churches were small and the combined salaries meagre. His financial affairs indeed became so straightened that he was obliged to resort to the practice of medicine in order to eke out a living; but encountering professional opposition from an unexpected source, he resigned his pastorate and removed to Savannah, Georgia, and from there to John's Island, South Carolina. At each of these places he was pastor of a Presbyterian Church. He died in 1812. He was described as a "popular and excellent preacher, who read his carefully prepared sermons. His articulation was clear and distinct, and his voice pleasing. He was of medium height and of fine presence." One of his daughters married the late John Crosby, Esq., of New York City, the father of the Rev. Dr. Howard Crosby.

Mr. Clarkson informed the congregation at a meeting held Sept. 29, 1801, of his intention to resign his pastoral charge of the congregations of Bridge Town and Greenwich; and this intention appears to have been carried out at the meeting of the Presbytery of Philadelphia, October 20, 1801.

January 7, 1795, David Potter was appointed Treasurer of the Congregation, and he and Eli Elmer were appointed collectors on the west side of the river, and John Moore White and Jeremiaah Buck were appointed collectors upon the east side.

May 19, 1795, a committee was appointed to number and rate the pews of the Church, which duty being performed and reported, the plan was unanimously agreed to and was as follows:

The pews were numbered from the pulpit towards the south end of the church; first on each side, and then in the centre, progressively from No. 1 to No. 38 inclusive, then rated as follows:

	Dollars	
Nos. 2 & 11 rated at	10 each	\$20
Nos. 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 18 & 20 at	8 each	80
Nos. 6, 7, 15, 16, 21, 22, 23, 24, 30 31, 32, 33 at	7 each	84
Nos. 1, 3, 17, 25, 26, 27, 28, 34, 35, 36, 37 at	6 each	66
Nos. 29 & 38 at	5 each	10
	Total,	\$260

Parson's Pew No. 20, not rated.

The number of the "Parson's Pew" stated as 20, should obviously be 19 as all the other numbers are duly rated. It will be noted that the total revenue of the church from the pew rents is but \$77.25 in excess of the pastor's salary.

Although the church was opened for public worship May 17, 1795, the plastering appears not to have been completed until 1798; it was not, in fact, ordered to be done until July 31st of that year. On Saturday next following the meeting of May 19, 1795, the pews were sold at public auction. The money which thus accrued was appropriated toward furnishing the church and was paid over to Eli Elmer for that purpose. It appears from this fact and also from the fact that subscriptions for the purpose of plastering the building were ordered to be taken, that the money raised by lottery was not sufficient to entirely complete and furnish it.

The exact total cost in the premises cannot now be ascertained.



The first sexton was Stephen Miller, a Revolutionary soldier. The first Secretary of Church and congregation was Jonathan Elmer. In the earlier history of this Church a "standing committee" supplied the place of the officers now known as trustees. Jonathan Elmer, Ephraim Seeley, John Moore White and Zachariah Lawrence composed the first "Standing Committee." Ruling Elders were not elected until 1796, when Nathaniel Harris, Zachariah Lawrence and John Lupton were chosen to that high office. The number of the first communicants was 35.

The congregation appears not to have been incorporated until December 4, 1802, when Jeremiah Buck, John Moore White, David Bowen, Samuel Moore Shute and Stephen Miller, having been duly elected trustees at a meeting of the Congregation on November 19th, 1802, duly executed and filed a certificate of incorporation, in accordance with the statute of this State, in the corporate name of "The Trustees of the Presbyterian Congregation of Bridgeton."

When this building was erected, the public, or, as it was called by the old people, the King's Highway, to Greenwich, ran through the middle of the lot, a little south of the Church. This fact probably was the reason why the church building faced the south. The road to Roadstown ran through that portion of what is now the cemetery to the north-west of the building. The Church therefore stood as it were, upon an island between the two roads. Broad street was afterwards altered by extending it from Lawrence street up to Fourth street, as West avenue was then called. The old King's Highway was altered, so that it ran to the north-west of the building, and a fence was put around the church property



in 1802. Subsequently the roads running to the north-west of the church, within the limits of the present cemetery were abandoned, and the adjacent streets and highways took shape as they now are.

Vine street was first opened in 1796, and was then called Back street. Lawrence and Giles streets were not opened in 1792. Broad street was originally called Main street, and afterwards Market street, from the fact that a brick market house was erected near the Court House. It was named Broad street in 1838 by a committee appointed to name the streets of the town. Of this committee the venerable Samuel Ward Seeley, now in his 92d year, is the sole survivor.

When what is now Lawrence street was opened, a strip off the eastern end was given up to form a four rod road, so that the fence now stands on the first row of graves, and is always taken as the first row by the sexton in his calculations. The bricks of the building are home-made, and were wrought near the Simpkins house, to the westward of the Church. They were burned a short distance south of the building.

My pleasant, if laborious duty, is now done. I have endeavored to state all important facts accessible, touching the organization of this congregation and the erection of this building; and have been careful to state no facts which have not been duly verified.

I have endeavored faithfully to delineate the modes of thought, the habits, and the customs of our forefathers.

I have pointed out how a small, remote and rural community, yet having within its limits some men of ability and experience, which had just emerged from a tremendous war, that strained all its resources, nevertheless, having aided in forming a new Government, went steadily

forward to raise this Christian temple in which to worship God in the faith which it had inherited.

Whatever may have been the faults and short-comings of our forefathers, they were those of their age and times; their virtues were their own.

They freely shed their blood for religious as well as civil liberty. They founded "A church without a Bishop, a State without a King;" and they transmitted to their descendants that springing courage, that inflexible resolution, which, when nearly three-quarters of a century had elapsed, and these liberties were assailed, led them upon a thousand battle-fields, with unfaltering devotion, to uphold our sinking flag and cause.

The church building which these men erected, stands before you.

It is a plain structure, consonant with the thoughts and habits of those who reared it. The cost of its construction was freely paid by free men.

No lofty spire crowns its summit. No chime of bells wrenched by church authority from toiling hands, have from this spot called to early mass, or in the gloaming, tolled forth the Angelus above these blooming fields, and this fair and busy town. No surpliced priest, owing prime allegiance to a foreign chief, and mumbling Latin prayers, no high altar, no elevated Host, no swinging censers, no perfumed incense, have ever invaded these sacred walls.

But for a hundred years, the light which was here kindled, has never been extinguished. For a hundred years the congregation which was here organized, in this building and the one which succeeded it, have followed the pure and simple faith of their Fathers.

The seed which was sown here in weakness has been

raised in power; and from the time when this corner stone was laid, until this day, this Church and congregation have been a constant, increasing, living force for good, not in this vicinity only, but in all this section of the State.

May it and that great Government whose flag and power protects it, so remain while time shall last:

Until that fateful, mighty day,  
 When earthly shadows, doubts, despair,  
 Shall like the morning's mist be swept away  
 By the sweet zephyrs of the heavenly air;  
 When clothed in radiant white, his trump in hand,  
 Whose golden tones shall sound o'er land and sea.  
 The Messenger of God by the great throne shall stand;  
 Earth's night forever lost in Heaven's eternity.

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NOTE—In my account of the manners and customs of the people prior to 1792, I have drawn freely upon the admirable history of Professor McMaster. I am also greatly indebted to Mr. Robert B. Potter, for much important data; and to Charles E. Sheppard, Esq., and Mr. George Hampton, for aid in tracing the titles to the several parcels of land which make up the area of the church premises.

**Historical Sketch by Rev. Henry Reeves, Ph.  
D.—A Brief Report made for Publication  
at the Time.**

The ceremony of dedication in May 1795, was over, and the little company that with such bright hopes had gathered to witness it, had retired to their homes, thankful that they had carried up the walls, enclosed the building, and made the place tolerably fit for worship. But there was much more to be done.

The names of the people at this time indicate the close connection between Bridge Town and Greenwich. "God made the country; man the town," wrote Cowper; but let me vary this saying a little for American purposes. God made the country, and the country made the town, at least Bridge Town was so made. Our making up was from Deerfield, Pittsgrove, Fairfield, and last but not least, from Greenwich.

To Mr. Freeman we owe the preservation of not a few of these facts concerning the first years of the church, as given in the delightful address to which you have just listened. Others before Mr. Freeman, were either careless or unfortunate; he was full and accurate, and anticipating future needs gave a brief sketch of the history of the church before his time, in the first pages of the session book.

The new church did good work. Bills were paid, the churchyard had been enlarged and enclosed, the church had been plastered within. The expense of the plastering was \$680.

This plastering includes the quaint ornaments back of the pulpit, some of which remain, the wreaths, two heads of unknown worthies, and the eye in the ceiling above, perhaps to remind one of Omniscience. The whole effect

of the finish was solemn and beautiful. A high pulpit, reached by a long, winding stairway, seemed to youthful attendants, of whom the speaker was one, to be suited to an exalted being, such as ministers were thought to be by the younger people.

After the church was built, a number of Lombardy poplars were planted around it. There is a steeple frame beneath the roof at the north or pulpit end, but it was thought too weak to support a bell.

In April 1802, the Bridgeton church had upon its roll, 50 communicants; in 1803, 63.

After Mr. Clarkson went away, the pulpit was vacant four years until Rev. Jonathan Freeman came. He was joint pastor of Greenwich and Bridgeton. His salary was \$666,66. After living in a parsonage between the two places he removed to Bridgeton. Morning and evening on Sunday he preached here; and with his good horse "Highlander," he drove to Greenwich to preach in the afternoon.

During his pastorate he received 138 members on examination, and 11 by certificate, solemnized 197 marriages and baptized 234 children.

These were the years when the great religious Societies of the country were formed: the American Bible Society, The American Board of Foreign Missions, The American Tract Society and others, and under Mr. Freeman's influence aided by Gen. Ebenezer Elmer, this church came into line with the effort to support them.

The "Cent Society" was also described by the speaker, the object of which was to raise money to assist poor students in training for the ministry. There were 80 female subscribers who gave a cent weekly.

At this time, in 1816, the inhabitants numbered only

1600. It was a village made up of about 240 houses, with plenty of fields enclosed by post and rail fences. Only a dozen buildings stood on the south side of Commerce street between the bridge and Elmer's grist mill.

Mr. Freeman, after he came to live in Bridgeton, preached in the Court House Wednesday evenings. In the winter of 1818 was carried out a novel scheme, as it then appeared, the establishment of the Monthly Concert of Prayer for Missions, which was becoming general throughout the country, and in connection with it the placing of a missionary box near the door.

Mr. Freeman died of bilious fever, Nov. 17th, 1822, in the 58th year of his age. He was buried in this churchyard, and over his remains the congregation placed a monument where you will read an inscription.

In 1816 was organized the "Young Female Religious Tract Society of Bridgetown," the design of which was to circulate religious tracts gratuitously." Elizabeth Elmer was the President, Amelia Freeman, Treasurer, Nancy B. Giles, Secretary.

Then followed a personal description of Mr. Freeman. His appearance was represented as such that half the people who saw him for the first time on the street, would, on meeting him, turn around for a second look, their thought being, "there goes an able man."

That he was a man of feeling no one doubted; he was a champion of orthodoxy and preached strong discourses, feeding his people with what they called "strong meat;" yet other sermons or parts of sermons, carried with them much tenderness and earnestness of appeal. He was especially gifted in prayer, bearing the hearts of the people along in the full tide of supplication. Rare indeed this faculty must be regarded, for if Dr. Guthrie is right

when he says, "It is harder work to pray than to preach, and for one who can pray well, I can get you a hundred who can preach well a whole hour," it must be admitted that this good pastor was an exception to the common lot.

A new roof was put upon the church in 1823.

Joint efforts were made by the two congregations to settle a pastor, but they disagreed as to the place of his residence. The Bridgeton committee of conference insisted on Bridgeton as the place. Greenwich assented only on the condition that it should pay less than one-half the salary. Rev. Mr. Biggs, who had been jointly called, declined the call.

To Greenwich, the mother church, I would here, were there time, pay a more extended tribute of appreciation, in view of the hitherto close connection of the churches, and some yielding of preferences on the part of Greenwich. To them this separation was at first a trying event. Rev. Brogan Hoff was now called to Bridgeton for his whole time; but to the situation alone were the demands and the final step due. The increase here was manifest, and the requirements of the congregation could not be met by its members without the settlement of a minister for his whole time. Greenwich had helped Bridgeton in the division of the preaching appointments and in the question of the pastoral residence.

Dr. Fithian considers that it had done so to its own disadvantage. To-day in the spirit of loyalty and gratitude we acknowledge the debt; the child that had then grown and felt its vital needs is the same that now, with the tenderness of old memories, sends to the mother its affectionate salutations and breathes for her a united, a manifold prayer for life prolonged, and prosperity ever increasing.

In 1824 Rev. Brogan Hoff was called by the Bridgeton congregation, acting independently, at a salary of \$650.

The Session House was built 1826-7.

Mr. Hoff's ministry was successful in securing additions to the church. He served nine years as pastor, and at the age of 61 years resigned, and went first to Pennsylvania and then to New York, where he died at the age of 75.

The speaker gave a description of this minister, and entered briefly upon Rev. John Kennedy's pastorate, 1834-1838. He was Scotch-Irish, a man of many good qualities, and a sound preacher, though lacking in some elements of popularity.

The speaker closed with an account of the building of the church on North Laurel street, in Mr. Kennedy's time, and ended with a reference to the good work of both churches, the old and the new, as bright lights in the constellation of Bridgeton's churches, both historic, and testifying by means of results to future generations, of the truthfulness and power of Christianity.







FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

## First Presbyterian Church and Rev. Samuel Beach Jones, D. D.

The Rev. Samuel Beach Jones began to preach in Bridgeton; October 27th, 1838. The Presbytery of Philadelphia received him as a member from the Presbytery of Mississippi in April, 1839, and met in Bridgeton on May 9th, and installed him as pastor of the First Presbyterian Church. On that occasion the Rev. Joseph H. Jones preached the sermon, on Acts XI: 24. "For he was a good man and full of the Holy Ghost." The Rev. Henry A. Boardman proposed the constitutional questions and delivered the charge to the pastor and the Rev. George W. Janvier gave the charge to the people.

On Thursday, May 21st, 1863, the Presbytery of West Jersey, upon the request of Doctor Jones dissolved the Pastoral relation which had happily existed between him and the First Church of Bridgeton for fully twenty-four years.

During this happy ministry, this church enjoyed a steady and prosperous growth. One evidence of its prosperity was the increase in benevolent contributions. In 1839 the Session reported to the General Assembly a total contribution of \$76.62, divided equally between Domestic and Foreign Missions. In Doctor Jones' last report (1863) the congregation had paid to the Benevolent Boards of the Church, one thousand two hundred and twenty dollars.

During this pastorate, the church building was enlarged at a cost of \$6,500.

So far as the addition of church members may indicate the spiritual results of the same period, the following facts and figures are worthy of remembrance:

In 1838 the Session had reported to the General As-

sembly a roll of 230 communicants. In the first report under Mr. Jones in 1839, the number was reduced to 185. This reduction of forty-five members must have been due, partly to the dismissal of fifteen members to the newly organized Second Church, partly to a sharp revision of the roll. The largest accessions to the church under Doctor Jones' ministry were in the years 1843, 1854 and 1859. During these three years 113 were added on examination, and 19 on certificate a total of 132.

During his entire ministry of 24 years according to the printed minutes from 1840 to 1863 inclusive, 261 were added on examination, and 150 on certificate, total 411, and after deducting the loss by death and dismissal, the roll in 1863 was 281. To form a just estimate of the growth of the whole Presbyterian Church in Bridgeton during almost a quarter of a century, it is fair to combine the reports of the two churches.

In 1840, the First Church reported a roll of 185, and the Second Church reported a roll of 130. In 1863 the First Church reported a roll of 281 and the Second Church reported a roll of 120. Thus the combined increase was from 215 to 401. It is proper also to remember that the population of Bridgeton increased from about 2,315 in 1838, to 5,661 in 1865. It has increased in 100 years from 300 to 11,424.

Samuel Beach Jones, the son of Paul Townsend Jones and of his wife Mary Lamboll Beach, was born in Charleston, South Carolina, on Nov. 23d, 1811. His paternal grandfather was the owner of a rice plantation, and for many years was the President of the Bank of South Carolina. His maternal ancestors held a large estate in Charleston, and in plantations on James Island.

The youthful Samuel had a brother Paul T., and a

sister Eliza Beach. The latter became the wife of Rev. Henry A. Boardman, D. D. The children spent their early years in Charleston. For their later education, their mother came with them to New Jersey and Samuel Beach entered the Academy at Morristown. In due time he entered Yale College and was graduated in 1832 in the same class with Rev. Lyman Atwater. He pursued the regular and took an extra course in the Theological Seminary at Princeton. Among his classmates in the Seminary were Professor Stephen Alexander and the Rev. William Brown; John Cameron Lowrie; Samuel Irenaeus Prime, and Robert Street.

Mr. Jones was licensed by the Presbytery of New Brunswick at Princeton, February 3d, 1836, and was ordained at Trenton, October 4th 1837. The Rev. Doctor Rice preached. The Rev. David Comfort presided and proposed the constitutional questions and made the ordaining prayer and Doctor Alexander gave the charge to the Evangelist, who was dismissed the same day to the Presbytery of Mississippi.

For a short time in 1836-37 he was connected, not as the local obituary notices asserted, with the Board of Foreign Missions in Philadelphia, but as Assistant Secretary of the Board of Home Missions, which was then located in that city. For one year, 1838, he occupied a chair as Professor of Theology and of Hebrew in Oakland College, Mississippi. In June, 1838, he married Sarah Ralston Chester, daughter of Rev. Dr. John Chester, of Albany.

He was one of the chief founders of the West Jersey Academy and carried on a lively discussion in reference to it in the *West Jersey Pioneer* over the signature "Civis." while his opponent Rev. Charles E. Wilson, of the Bap-

tist Church, assumed the name "Citizen." Dr. Jones visited the churches to raise money for the Academy, which flourished as long as he was connected with the Presbytery.

He received the title of Doctor of Divinity from Princeton College in 1851, and was one of its Trustees from 1861 to 1866. He was also chosen a Director of the Theological Seminary in Princeton in 1847. Both these offices he felt in honor constrained to resign when he changed his ecclesiastical relation.

If not the most influential in securing the organization of the Presbytery of West Jersey, which was constituted, very soon after his installation, he was thereafter one of its most active and influential members and its stated Clerk from its organization for ten years. Always prompt and punctual in attendance he was an acknowledged leader and some facetiously called him the Pope. He was moderator of Presbytery in 1845 and 46. He was chosen unanimously to be Moderator of the Synod of New Jersey at Princeton, October 21st, 1851, and opened the Synod of New Brunswick, October 19th, 1852, with sermon founded on 2 Thess. II, 13, 14. Three times he was commissioned to the General Assembly in 1846, 1852 and 1855.

In March 1854 an urgent call was presented to him from the Third Presbyterian Church of Newark. After due deliberation he declined the call and one controlling reason was the wide opportunity for church extension which he foresaw throughout an extensive region in West Jersey. His zeal in this department of work was unsurpassed, liberal and self-denying. He took no stipulated vacation; but found recreation in visiting the feeble churches. Large congregations gathered to hear

the silver trumpet of the Gospel, when it was announced that Dr. Jones would preach at Leeds Point, Absecon, Somers Point, Weymouth Works, Mays Landing, Tuckahoe, Fislerville and other places. If during the summer, following an apostle's examples he found it pleasant to go a fishing, it was more self denying to be snow bound for more than a week during the winter in the woods of Atlantic county.

In the troublesome and exciting times of the civil war, a hint from his session that his views upon national affairs were not acceptable, and were injurious to his influence—was followed by a prompt and peremptory resignation of his pastoral charge. In the excitement no formal vote of the congregation was allowed by him, and therefore to this day, it is uncertain whether the majority of the whole congregation would have voted to concur in the dissolution of the pastoral relation. Dr. Jones, however, did not remove his residence from Bridgeton.

His subsequent relation to the Presbytery was not happy, neither did it terminate happily. In 1866 Dr. Jones requested a letter of dismissal to the Presbytery of East Hanover. The Presbytery of West Jersey demurred, postponed action and directed the Stated Clerk to inquire of him whether he intended to remove to a field of labor beyond the jurisdiction of this Presbytery. Dr. Jones replied, "that he was willing enough to answer a simple question, but declined to give reasons, because Presbytery had no right to make his dismissal contingent upon such question, for it was unprecedented and gratuitously insulting to him a member in regular standing," and Dr. Jones informed the Presbytery that he should not renew his request; but regarding it as virtually refused would use the official letter of the Stated Clerk as equivalent to



an ordinary letter of good standing and with it would present himself to the body he wished to join.

At the first Church of Elizabeth during intervals of Synod October 18th 1866, ten ministers and two ruling elders being present, Presbytery with one dissenting voice maintained its right and insisted upon having some reason for an application of this kind and considering Doctor Jones' course to be disorderly and in violation of his ordination vow, required him to present at the next meeting on November 1st his reasons for desiring a dismissal to the Presbytery of East Hanover. On April 17th, 1867 at Swedesboro, Presbytery struck from the roll the name of Doctor Jones.

The real motive of the Presbytery's hesitation to grant a dismissal was the apprehension that Doctor Jones, holding a good standing in the Southern Presbyterian Church, might attempt to establish another Church in Bridgeton; as some urged him to do, and it was evident in the excited state of feeling that a word from him as a leader, would have gathered around him many followers. But his intimate friends, at least, well knew, and as the sequel proved that Doctor Jones had too noble and lofty a sense of honor, as a gentleman and a Christian to divide or to do anything to weaken this church for the upbuilding of which he had spent the strength of his life.

The *Free Christian Commonwealth* of Louisville, Kentucky, of November 9th, 1866, copied from the *Baltimore Sun* an account of the organization of the Presbytery of Chesapeake, when Rev. S. B. Jones, D. D. was chosen Moderator and Rev. J. A. Lafevre Stated Clerk for the ensuing six months. The same paper May 16th 1867 contained a sermon preached at the opening of the Presbytery of Patapsco at its meeting in Baltimore, April



17th, 1867 by the Moderator, S. B. Jones, D. D., published by order of Presbytery. The theme was "Christ's kingdom not of this world," and the text John XVIII; 30.

Doctor Jones seems not to have been ambitious to write for the press. Besides the above mentioned sermon his discourse at the inauguration of the Rev. Wm. Henry Green as Professor of Biblical and Oriental Literature in the Theological Seminary at Princeton Sept. 30th was published.

His address at the temperance meeting in Bridgeton July 5th, was published in the WEST JERSEY PIONEER July 14th, 1852.

We find a pamphlet on the responsibilities and duties of teachers, or a charge to the Rev. Henry Snyder on his inauguration as principal of the West Jersey Academy delivered on Thursday, May 18th, 1854.

He also wrote a history of the First Presbyterian Church of Bridgeton, but the manuscript cannot be found.

After the return of peace to our own distracted country, overtures were presented from churches and from colleges for the services of Doctor Jones, but he preferred to spend his advancing years in the quiet retirement of his old home, yet not in idleness. He never refused an invitation to preach when he was invited by the different denominations of christians, and he was always acceptable.

From 1870 to 1875 a period of years he regularly supplied the pulpit of the Fairfield Church at Fairton on Sabbaths, and during the week. A keen eyed stickler for ecclesiastical law might have discovered an informality, if not irregularity, but the Presbytery was not disposed to reopen old issues.

Doctor Jones was admonished by failing health to dis-

continue his labors at Fairton, and after six repeated apoplectic attacks he fell asleep March 19th, 1883.

The funeral services, attended by a large number of sorrowful friends at his residence and at the West Church, were very brief and without ostentation.

Of his family three children died in infancy. His wife and five children survive him. The widow died at Orange, N. J., March 20th, 1891. One son, a noble and brave soldier of the Union army, subsequently died in consequence of three wounds received in battle. A large portion of Doctor Jones' valuable library of three thousand volumes was given after his death to the Theological Seminary at Columbia, South Carolina.

Feeling our own inability to do justice to the delineation of his character and lest personal friendship should seem to warp the judgment, let us accept the testimony of other competent witnesses, and quote first from the Centennial Discourse delivered July 1876, in the First Church, of Bridgeton, by the Rev. J. Allen Maxwell, then pastor of this church.

After referring to Doctor Jones' successful efforts in 1845, to liquidate a heavy debt, of which the books of the trustees made honorable mention, Mr. Maxwell said: "Though it might seem inappropriate to eulogize one, who is a resident of our city, I cannot refrain from paying a tribute to him, who for so long a time held the foremost position in the ministry of the southern portion of the State; one who by his learning; his talent, his eminent qualities of leadership; by his social manners and his devout piety, wielded in this congregation a powerful influence for great good; nor paused there; but wielded in all this section for many years an influence on the thought and opinion of the commonwealth that was rare

as it was beneficial. Many who sit before me, (said Pastor Maxwell,) and many more of other churches, as well as scores who have gone to their reward above, received from him the wisest teachings in the glorious tenets of our religion and especially as these are set forth in the standards of the Presbyterian Church.

The local papers of Bridgeton at the time of his decease paid worthy tribute to the memory of Doctor Jones. One writer in the *New Jersey Patriot* of March 23, 1883, said: "Doctor Jones was doubtless the most learned and eloquent minister ever stationed in this city. He was of a commanding presence, possessed a fine voice, and was a beautiful reader. None ever heard him read and explain his scripture lesson before preaching, without being impressed with his most effective and instructive manner of so doing. 1/

Another witness, evidently a Bridgetonian, wrote from Philadelphia to the *Chronicle*. "The announcement of the death of Rev. Dr. S. B. Jones, in the last issue of the *Chronicle*, awakened memories of early days. The Doctor, when in his prime, was a man of decided character and predominant influence. A Southerner by birth, but educated in the North, he was warmly attached to the South and her domestic and social institutions. His personal presence was commanding, his manners courtly and prepossessing. Always dignified, especially in the discharge of official duty he inspired humble souls with something like reverence. A prominent gentleman of my acquaintance, once said to me that when he was a boy, he used to look up to Dr. Jones as something almost divine. He was gifted with remarkable fluency in conversation, in which he always took a leading part, by the force of his character and the tacit consent of his in-

terlocutor. He seemed to recognize by sight, almost everybody in the county and possessed a surprising memory for names and local history. In the social circle and by the wayside, he often indulged in ready wit. He was born for leadership, and in almost any Presbytery would have exercised a controlling influence. He was a sound and judicious expositor of holy writ, very clear in his deductions, magnificent in delivery. He read hymns with suavity and tenderness, which could hardly fail to impress the imagination and heart of the susceptible. I shall never forget the deep pathos, with which he was wont to render Watt's version of the 92d Psalm, beginning "Sweet is the work my God my King." He was fond of sacred biography and made the lives of saints and sinners of the Bible yield practical and profitable lessons for daily conduct. He had fine musical taste, and no voice joined more heartily than his in the praises of the congregation. The present prosperity of the venerable First Church, I think, is largely due to his labors and influence extending through a quarter of a century.

The Session of the First Presbyterian Church adopted the following minute on March 22, 1883:

The Session of the First Presbyterian Church, Bridgeton, having heard with unfeigned sorrow of the death of the former pastor of this church, the Rev. Samuel Beach Jones, D. D., desire, by a record in their minutes, to bear testimony to his noble Christian character, his excellent qualities of heart and mind, the untold and inestimable influence for good exerted by his preaching and his example in the church and in the community; his progressive educational and missionary spirit, and his fealty to the great doctrines as well as the Boards of the church.

They desire further to express their deep sympathy with, and sorrow for his afflicted family, to whom it is directed that a copy of this minute be sent.

**History of Church Music and Hymnology in  
Bridgeton, by Mrs. Robert DuBois,  
Read by James J. Reeves.**

There are comparatively few facts known regarding church music in Bridgeton as it was one hundred years ago. Records kept by the trustees say: "On the 19th day of May 1795, Jacob Shull, Joshua Reeves, Clarence Mulford and Ephraim Riley, were appointed clerks." These were also called Precentors, and sometimes Choristers, a misnomer, as there can be no chorister without a choir. In December of the same year it reads thus:

"At a congregational meeting it was agreed unanimously that Jacob Shull should be employed as clerk of the church music for the ensuing year; that he be allowed a compensation of \$32 a year, to be paid half yearly out of the sum arising from the rents of the pews and seats in the church if sufficient after paying Dr. Clarkson's salary, if not, the deficiency to be provided by the congregation, subject to the reduction of one dollar for every default in attending public worship, (Sunday or week day) and officiating, either himself or some other suitable person for him, when unable to attend himself."

"In January 1797, at a congregational meeting held in Bridgeton, Joshua Reeves, Clarence Mulford and Ephraim Riley were appointed clerks."

"In 1798, Jacob Shull, Ephraim Riley, Clarence Mulford and Jabez Smith, were appointed clerks for three following years."

"January 1801, Lot Fithian, Jabez Smith and Richard Mulford were appointed clerks. Lot Fithian was Chairman of the Music Committee. These same were continued for the two following years."

January 1st, 1803, Richard Mulford, Lot Fithian and

Ephraim Riley, were chosen clerks. Their motto must have been "In Union there is Strength," as they had only, at one period in 1796, considered one clerk sufficient to lead the singing of the church.

Our venerable friend, Dr. Enoch Fithian, whose age corresponds with that of this church, says that his earliest recollections are of two leaders, who always appeared in their military suits at church—these were Gen. Rose and Col. McCalla. This must have been about the year 1812, John Ware is also named as one of the early leaders. These always arose and stood before the pulpit below stairs, announced the tune and gave the pitch from a small instrument called a tuning fork. This is the only instrument ever used in the old venerated church for devotional purposes, if we except, it might be, in 1861, when services were held there while the new brick church was being enlarged. The officers, in the old church days were by no means scrupulous about the introduction of "Fourth of July" celebrations, and the accompanying brass bands, drums and "jingle-jacks" into the church, such privilege being accorded, and the following entry is read from their books. "The committee having in charge preparations for the Fourth of July, to be held in the old church would include in their announcements, the following: The singers of Bridgeton are respectfully requested to take the singers seats in the gallery." These gatherings in this old time-honored church, are remembered by many here to-day. They continued from 1830 to 1840.

Going back to the year 1818, it was then noised about that there was a piano in Bridgeton. It was the property of one Mr. Clark, who lived on Laurel Hill, formerly from Fairton, N. J. This caused great excitement

among the young people, and consternation in the minds of some older ones, as "it drew the attention of the young, especially of the young men, from their daily avocations and the sterner duties of life." Some of the fathers and mothers regarded it as an emissary of evil and talked of the expediency of advising it removed. The second in town was owned by Mr. Samuel Seeley, who lived in the brick house east of the First Church parsonage. There was one about the same time brought from Philadelphia by Miss Eliza Murphy, a teacher of music, who remained here a short time. Some can remember the lessons she taught them, both vocal and instrumental. It was long after this, before there were more than a half dozen pianos in Bridgetown.

It was in 1830 that a new departure occurred in the music of the old church. It was the introduction of mixed voices into the square front seats of the gallery, when Mr. and Mrs. Francis G. Brewster, Mr. and Mrs. John Heilig, Mr. and Mrs. Jonathan Ogden, and others, leaving the restraints of the high backed seats below, and the ever watchful eyes of mothers and mothers-in-law, who would sometimes say to them, "don't sing so loud," betook themselves to the gallery and made those walls resound with sweet strains of old "Winter," "Bray," "Majesty," and "New Durham." This was a self-appointed choir, ruled by its own laws; it is said there was no special leader. They were divided among the three square seats, while the stove-pipe ran through the centre of the middle pew directly over their heads. Mrs. Brewster and Mr. Jonathan Ogden, now of Brooklyn, are with us here to-day, and vouch for the truth of this statement.

It was reserved for Mr. Joseph Reeves to organize the



first regular choir, (it is thought the first in South Jersey,) about the year 1835, one year before the dedication of the new church, at which time, Mr. Rural Shaw came from Baltimore and taught singing in connection with the church. This gave the first impetus to a more decided style of music. The methods used laid a foundation for a more modern style of singing. Church music made rapid strides, the different parts being more fully introduced. Mr. Shaw was the author of several valuable books, one, "The Seraph" was much used thereafter in the church. His time was limited to six weeks, for which he was paid \$150. Classes met every night in the week, except Sundays; it being thought of sufficient importance to give up the usual evening services for this unusual privilege, before unknown. It was a novel event for Bridgeton, parents and children participated. Juvenile classes met afternoons in the Session House, and among these were children of six and seven years. Fathers and mothers encouraged them to strive for the highest honor, which was to arise from their seats and sing alone, a tune "by note," without mistake. All unnecessary business was laid aside, and much time given to study. Fathers were known to write the staff and copy music at the desk, the counter, the work bench, and by the side of the whirling nail machines. These were the grandfathers of some of our present singers. Children from this time sang lustily, through the house and everywhere. Some plied the needle with note books on their laps; it lent a charm to the singing of the Sunday School; we were having no public anniversaries then, else it would have compared favorably with those of the present day. At that time the hymns of the church book were sung as when they



used to worship in the old Court House; children committed the hymns to memory then, and who can estimate the value to those children, of the work of storing in their minds so many of the good old Psalms and hymns, while yet they were impressable; the few books they had then were dearly prized and well read. Their library books were such as "Life of Henry Martyn;" "History of the Jews;" and "Memoirs of Mrs. Judson," and were enjoyed equally by mother and child.

Think of those mothers with the plain brown hymn books, with no index of names to tell who were the authors of the hymns they most dearly prized. Their intelligent minds sought to know such things, and one feels like dropping a tear, as an old time-worn book reveals on many a page, the names of authors written in pencil, still visible, as they learned that Mrs. Brown wrote the hymn

"I love to steal awhile away  
From every cumbering care."

And that Mrs. McCarter sang from the depths of her heart that plaintive song

"Saviour hast thou fled forever,  
From this tempest riven heart?"

And that Mrs. Gray was the author of that sweet dirge,

"Hark! to the solemn bell,  
Mournfully pealing;"

Say not, they were too solemn in their tastes and feelings. Who knows what comfort it brought to their souls to know that other mothers had experienced like conflicts with themselves; and close by, the name of Watts, appears in pencil over the inspiring hymn

"Begin my soul some Heavenly theme,"

showing they did not always tarry in the valley of despondency, but hied themselves to the mountain of cheerful song.

It was in 1824, that a well remembered book called "Village Hymns," was published by Dr. Nettleton, the revivalist. This was used in the Prayer meetings when some of us were very young. It contained some curious and unique hymns. We will quote a verse of one.

"Oh, how the resurrection light  
Will clarify believers sight,  
How joyful will the saints arise  
And rub the dust from off their eyes."

Our mothers loved and were satisfied with the old psalms and hymns, they were taught the children in the every-day schools. The widow of one of the old "Clerks," Mrs. Thomas Woodruff, taught a school for small children in a house on the very spot where the new brick church stands. Children of seven years were called upon to repeat such hymns as

"Father, whate'er of earthly bliss  
Thy sovereign will denies;"

In one mind, at least, that hymn never fails to call up the face and form of "old Mrs. Betsy Woodruff," Much of the modern hymnology touches only the emotions; the old reaches to both heart and intellect. The more modern hymns of Ray Palmer, which all love to sing, are peerless, such as

"Come, Jesus, Redeemer, abide thou  
with me;—" and  
"My faith looks up to thee  
Thou Lamb of Calvary."

But there can be no better than the hymns of Newton, Steele, Wesley and Cowper, timid, morbid, prince of poets,—Cowper—How sublimely he sings

"God moves in a mysterious way  
His wonders to perform;"

And how touchingly the solemn hymn,

"There is a fountain filled with blood."

But it seems presumptuous to touch on this subject, or to draw comparisons. The fountain of Hymnology is too broad to span and too deep to fathom.

Returning to 1837, the year when the first choir was established. It was about this time when the first instrument, a bass viol, was introduced and played by Mr. Charles Cutter, of New England. He was assistant to Mr. Henry Freeman, Principal of the Bank Street Academy. When Mr. Reeves asked permission to use it in the choir, the Trustees replied: "If you want it you must have it, but the less said about it the better. You will have to do it on the sly;" so sacrilegious did it seem to them to take a fiddle into the church. On the morning of its admission the choir sang before the church,

"Blest be the tie that binds."

All objection was withdrawn—the viol conquered. A similar instrument was used for several years after this, played by a much esteemed Elder; now gone to his rest, Mr. Nathaniel Fish.

Among the first singers of soprano were Mrs. Jane Sheppard Lee, Mrs. Elizabeth Fithian Dowdney and Mrs. Jane Barber Parvin, now of Philadelphia. The earliest alto singers were the late Miss Hannah Elmer and Miss Sarah B. Potter, afterwards Mrs. William G. Nixon.

The first melodeon was introduced in 1850. The first to play this was Miss Mary H. Elmer, afterward Mrs. Judge John T. Nixon, of Trenton. The second was Miss Martha P. Reeves, now Mrs. George W. Bush of Wilmington, Del. The third was Miss Sarah Fithian of East Commerce street.

In 1862 a pipe organ was bought, In 1873 it was sold and a "Grand Hook and Hasting's" organ was built, at

a cost of \$3,500. Mr. James Smith of Philadelphia, was first organist. He was succeeded by Mr. William Wright, whose father was a Baptist minister at Roadstown. Mr. Wright was very youthful, of grave and earnest manner, with strong denominational proclivities, yet, in the three years intercourse with our equally strong Presbyterianism, there was never a ripple to disturb friendly feeling. His was a character to admire, ever faithful, coming through sunshine or storm, in carriage or on horseback Saturday nights to rehearsals, and back, to return early on the Sabbath morning. The salary was not large, and the organists in the early days were the guests of the choristers, who gladly pay this little tribute to his worth. He was long pastor of a church in Connecticut, and died but a few weeks ago. Mr. Wright's successors were Prof. Agthe, Mr. William I. Howell, Mrs. Sarah DuBois Brewer, Mrs. Bessie Reeves Fithian, Miss Mary F. Reeves, and Mr. Preston Miller, who now most efficiently fills the position.

In all these years there have been but three leaders of this choir. Mr. Joseph Reeves, the originator, most faithfully conducted it for twenty-seven years. Many can testify to his works of faith and labors of love. His record as chorister and Elder, is on High. He threw his mantle upon the shoulders of Mr. Robert DuBois, in the year 1861, which duty he continued to perform for twenty years. It may be said that to him, both church and town owe much for progress in music. His was a zeal which water could not quench, nor floods drown; having a musical force in his own house, no storm, however severe, could prevent him with his family from the duties of his choir; no expense was ever grudged, no sacrifice too great to make; no choice selection too good to give to

the straggling few who might come to church on a rainy day. His motto was, "Those who come through storm, deserve the best music and shall have it." Mr. James J. Reeves assisted Mr. DuBois in the leadership for a short period, when he felt called to other responsibilities.

In 1881, Mr. DuBois resigned in favor of Mr. Thomas R. Janvier, who is now the popular leader, and standing upon this platform, leading the music upon this immortal occasion, speaks for himself.

It seems suitable here that mention shall be made of Mr. Lorenzo Pierce, who for twenty-five years, with but little compensation, faithfully served as organ blower. In the more primitive days, it was he, who stood smiling, ever ready with the horse which was to carry the organist to his country home. He has been recently superseded by the new water motor.

Thus far our reference has been mainly of the First Church. The Second has kept pace with it. It has the honor of having the first organ in Bridgeton. It was, of course, small compared with their present organ. Their choir has sustained its good reputation for singing, and has had some fine organists; such as their Hardy, their Roney, their Biglow, and their Mears, and lastly their Lang. The Third Church has a superior organ, over which several worthy of mention have presided. Chief of whom, Rev. Mr. L. E. Coyle deserves more than a passing notice, for clear insight, delicacy of finish and most artistic performance, faithful as an advisor and instructor, ever ready to help towards the elevation of a fine musical standard in our growing city. His place can scarcely be filled. Miss Maud Cheshire is at present the faithful and able organist in this church.

These three churches have worked together for the best

interest of music in various social and benevolent enterprises, and united as they are in all essential points, we would to-day, in this great Centennial gathering, hallowed by all its precious surroundings, clasp hands and sing

“Blest be the tie that binds,”

There have been other aids to music in this town: Musical Conventions were organized in 1855 and continued for twenty years, during which time our town enjoyed the advantage of much of the best talent in the country. The first session was held in Sheppard’s building, meetings continued for three days and were conducted by the favorite singer and composer, George H. Root. He was followed by Prof. Bradbury, who brought out the beautiful “Cantata of Esther the Queen.” He was the author of some of our sweetest tunes, one of them, “Olive’s Brow,” is most dear to many hearts.

It is likely that none made a more profound impression upon his class than the esteemed and lamented Dr. Hastings. Many here to-day can recall his venerable face and earnest christian words as he labored to instil in the minds of his pupils the importance of rightly interpreting the words of a hymn, and of adapting it to song. Many of his beautiful hymns can be found in the index of our Hymnals.

Prof. Agthe established the first classical singing society in Bridgeton, about twenty-five or thirty years ago, “The Choral Union.” The public mind was not yet prepared for the advent of so high a class of music, and the society had a difficult work before them. At that time “Schiller’s Song of the Bell,” was taken up, difficult selections were studied; the class plodded on, giving occasional public rehearsals, but were often much

disheartened to read criticisms in papers say, "the singing was far above the heads of the people who would much rather hear a simple Scotch ballad than listen to the opera of Martha or the Oratorios of Creation or of Messiah."

For many years after this, there was no society for the study of the higher class of music, until Mr. Aaron Taylor of Philadelphia, came to teach at Ivy Hall, and established the well known Musical Union, which was later carried on to greater attainments by Mr. Thomas R. Janvier.

It may be well to note some of the connecting links in the chain of this brief and imperfect history, The law of heredity is sound in this as in all things else. Observe the prominent singers and players of instruments in this town. Trace the descendents of those who have been leaders or "Clerks" in the church music in this community, during the last century. You will find them among the leading singers of to-day. The tuneful mantles of the fathers and mothers have fallen upon the children unto the third and fourth generations.

July 26, 1892.

**Second Presbyterian Church.—Paper Prepared by the Rev. H. H. Beadle.**

Previous to the year 1836, the First Church of Bridgeton, under the leadership of Godly men, the fragrance of whose good deeds scents the air and makes it sweet as the breath of a blossoming clover field, even now in the day of their no less worthy grandchildren, held the land almost in its own grasp. There were only two churches in the town beside, and these as yet but feeble. The noble work of the First Church was so well done, that a crowd of worshipers had gathered into its walls; its pews were occupied and there was little or no room for further growth.

At this time God moved the hearts of a few, to set on foot the project of organizing a second church, and of erecting another building for its use, in order to make place for growth, and opportunity to work for the Master. With this in view many talks were had, and as a promise of what was to come and of the interest which was had in the movement, \$616.02 were raised to carry out the good work. But so persistent and outspoken was the opposition by the many to this movement, who feared its effect in weakening the mother church, that it was decided wise to drop the matter for a while, until the way should seem a little more clear and not quite so beset with obstacles.

Even the Presbytery of West Jersey, refused to organize a new church and threw the petition of those requesting it out of court, on the ground that there was no need in Bridgeton for two churches; and that a second would only serve to paralyze the first instead of stimulating it; and that it would necessitate the waste of funds which ought to be put to better use.





SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.



The money which had been given for the enterprise, with the consent of the donors, was turned over to the Trustees of the Presbyterian Church in Millville, to aid them in the establishment of Presbyterianism in that place.

So great, however, was the need of more church room, and so evident was the fact, that the effort could not sleep long; and after a few months, the work that had been seemingly abandoned, was again undertaken with the most earnest determination, that as it seemed to be God's work, it must go on, and no opposition should be allowed to stand in the way of its accomplishment.

In order to make a more definite move and to inaugurate the work, through the courtesy of the officials of the Methodist Episcopal Church, then on the corner of Washington and Bank streets, the little frame building was hired for part of the day, and Sabbath afternoon services were at once begun.

The first service was held on the 25th of August 1838, and the first sermon was preached by Rev. Mr. Davis of the Fairmount Church, Philadelphia. From this date services were regularly held Sabbath afternoons in that place, until the completion of what was sometimes called the Stone Church in November 1840, more than two years after.

House to house, prayer meetings were held during the week, and a large open wagon was used to pick up and carry to and fro, those who lived at too great a distance for easy walking, or who were unable to attend except by these means.

A meeting of those in favor of organizing a new church was called for Sept. 22, 1838, of which the following are the minutes:

"A meeting of persons friendly to organizing a second Presbyterian Church in Bridgeton, was held in the old M. E. Church, on Saturday evening Sept. 22, 1838. Abijah Harris was chosen Chairman and F. G. Brewster, Secretary. The object of the meeting being stated by the Rev. Mr. Jno. Grant, of Philadelphia, it was unanimously resolved,

That, after months of serious consideration, taking all the circumstances into view, having weighed the matter in our own minds; we are fully persuaded that the interest of the Redeemer's Kingdom, (by the blessing of God) may be greatly promoted by the establishment of a second Presbyterian Church in this town, to be under the care of the Third Presbytery of Philadelphia.

*Resolved*, That a petition be drawn up immediately and signers obtained for the purpose above mentioned. Also that D. P. Stratton, Josiah Fithian and F. G. Brewster, be a committee to circulate said petition and present it to the Third Presbytery of Philadelphia, and have power to transact any other business relative to the establishment of the said contemplated church.

The most friendly and christian spirit pervaded the meeting which was dismissed by singing the following verse, and prayer by Rev. Mr. Grant.

'Lo what an entertaining sight  
These friendly brethren prove,  
Whose cheerful hearts in bands unite  
Of harmony and love.'

ABIJAH HARRIS, Chairman.

F. G. BREWSTER, Secretary."

Thirty-one names were signed to this petition, and as the Old School Presbytery of West Jersey had rejected the application for a second organization and declined to father it or foster it or have anything to do with it, application was made to the New School Third Presbytery of Philadelphia. A matter not of choice but necessity.

This Presbytery at its meeting at Columbus, in this State, Oct. 2, 1838, took the following action.

*Resolved*, That the prayer of the applicants be granted and that Rev. Messrs. Scott and Patton be a committee to organize them into a church, if the way be clear.

On Thursday the 11th of Oct., was held a special service of self consecration and of prayer for help and guidance, and for special blessing on the new enterprise, which seemed almost too great for such a feeble handful to carry on. And on Sunday after (the 14th) the committee from Presbytery visited Bridgeton and organized the Second Presbyterian Church of Bridgeton, with seventeen members, of whom only one remains to this day.

Many of these seventeen were received not by letter but on satisfactory evidence of their being in good and regular standing of evangelical churches; for so bitter was the feeling that the sessions of the church to which they belonged in the Presbytery of West Jersey, Old School, refused to grant them letters to this New School Church.

It may be interesting to know the reasons which influenced these good men of those days to refuse to recognize this church.

The following is a minute of a meeting of session at which such action was taken, and the reason is given therefor.

"Jan. 16, 1839, Session met agreeably to appointment at the residence of Mr. Uriah Woodruff. Members present, Messrs. Enoch H. Moore, Dan. Simpkins, and Uriah D. Woodruff. Rev. Benj. Tyler Jr., of Greenwich, presided by request of Session. Applications were laid before the session for dismissal on certificates to the Second Presbyterian Church for the following persons, viz.: Mrs. Rachel Miller, Hannah Harris, Anna Maria Crane, Ruth Brewster, Margaret Lummis and Miss Phebe Fithian.

"After mature deliberation the Session came to the following conclusion. That whereas certain persons, viz., F. G. Brewster and others, did apply to the Session of this church on the 29th of September, last to be dismissed on certificate. Certifying, moreover, that it was their purpose to be regularly organized as a Presbyterian Church, and whereas said applicants upon their request being

granted did apply to and were organized a church by a body which we do not acknowledge as forming any part of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, and said body not being recognized by the General Assembly of said church, and whereas, the petition of said applicants, viz., Rachel Miller, Hannah Harris, Anna Maria Crane, Ruth Brewster, Margaret Lummis and Phebe Fithian, does specify their intention to connect themselves with that church, so organized and known by the name of the Second Presbyterian Church of Bridgeton. Therefore resolved, that certificates of their regular standing as members of this church, be granted to said applicants. Declaring however, that this Session do not acknowledge said church with which they are about to unite, as forming any part of the Presbyterian Church in these United States.

And further resolved that a copy of the above preamble and resolutions be presented to said applicants with their certificates.

Signed,

BENJ. TYLER, JR.,

Moderator of Session.

CERTIFICATE. We hereby certify that Rachel Miller, Hannah Harris, Ruth Brewster, Anna Maria Crane, Margaret Lummis and Phebe H. Fithian, are members of the Presbyterian Church of Bridgeton, in regular standing, and are hereby dismissed at their own request to unite with a certain body called a Second Presbyterian Church, which body, however, this Session pursuant to the above resolutions, do not acknowledge as forming any part of the Presbyterian Church.

Signed,

ENOCH MOORE,

DAN. SIMPKINS,

URIAH D. WOODRUFF.

January 16, 1839

Israel Miller and F. G. Brewster were elected Elders of the new church. Mr. Miller subsequently removed his connection to Greenwich, and died in 1891.

This organization service which meant so much to those who took part in it, and so much to the present congregation of the Second Church who succeed to their inheritance, was closed with the hymn

"Blest be the tie that binds,"

and with a prayer for God's blessing upon the people and the enterprise that started with such assured prospects of years of labor and trouble before its final success.

A meeting of the congregation, probably the first, was held November 3, 1838, of which General Ebenezer Elmer, was Chairman. The only business apparently, was the choice of a site for the new church and the election of a Trustee.

It was almost unanimously (only three dissenting) decided to build on the east side of the river or "creek," as it is called in the minutes.

D. P. Stratton and Abijah Harris were elected Trustees and instructed to go out with a subscription paper and raise money. A good beginning of their duties, and a service which has very largely fallen out of fashion in these days.

They were also to select a suitable location for the church building and report.

May 11, 1839, six months after, a meeting of the male members was held to hear the report of these Trustees. \$4,020.50 had been subscribed. A large sum for those days, and for so feeble a band. A lot also on North Pearl street had been offered to the church by Daniel P. Stratton as a gift, which was most thankfully accepted. Additional Trustees were elected, and the Board when fully constituted consisted of Samuel Harris, Francis G. Brewster, John Mahan, D. P. Stratton and Adrian Odgen. Each one of whom subscribed to the following oath.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ do swear, that I will support the constitution of the United States. So help me God.

Signed, \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_ do sincerely profess and swear that I do and will bear true faith and allegiance to the government established in this State under authority of the people. So help me God.

Signed, \_\_\_\_\_

And I, ————, do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the trust reposed in me as Trustee of the Second Presbyterian Church of Bridgeton, according to the best of my ability and understanding. So help me God.

Signed, \_\_\_\_\_

After subscribing to such oaths as these, the county, State and church ought surely to have each been able to count upon the hearty support and service of these Trustees, that they would be ready on the instant to raise money for the last or arms for the first in case of need.

On the 17th of August, 1839, the corner stone was laid with the usual ceremonies by Rev. Mr. Campbell, of Philadelphia, assisted by Rev. Mr. Porter of Fairfield.

A Sunday School was of course started at once, and was opened under the Superintendency of Elder Brewster, with five teachers and seventeen scholars in a little room on the North side of Commerce street, and just East of the bridge.

Here the accommodation soon became too small, and the school was moved to the upper story of a blacksmith shop on Laurel street, next door to the First Church, where it remained until the first Sabbath in May 1840, when it made its final change into the lecture room of the, as yet, unfinished church, where, amid the dirt and confusion of the incomplete work overhead, the school met and grew. Happy to be at last in its own house.

November 18, 1839, Rev. James Stratton, son of Daniel P. Stratton, was invited to fill the pulpit for six months, which he did most acceptably to the little church and with great profit to it.

At this time the church suffered from a severe blow in the death of Mr. Daniel P. Stratton, who was the life of the movement. It seemed a sad providence. Mr. Stratton frequently said that if he could live to walk the floor of



the new church, he would be content, but he was denied that prayer. While not a member of the church himself, Mr. Stratton had in the ministry a brother, Rev. David Stratton, for many years the beloved pastor of the church in Salem, N. J.; two sons, William and James, and two grandsons, William and Wallace; all formerly settled as pastors in the South.

On the 15th of July 1840, Rev. J. L. Bartlett, was called to the pastorate, and that he might be free from all worldly care and avocations was promised a salary of \$300.

He held the call for a year and over, while making up his mind as to accepting it. He finally declined it, but in the meanwhile occupied the pulpit and went with the little congregation into its long delayed, but at last completed building on the 6th of November, 1840, when the church was dedicated. Rev. John Grant, a staunch friend, preaching the sermon.

Mr. Bartlett was a man very much beloved and an unusually good preacher, and it was unfortunate that his health would not allow him to remain in the North. He died April 24, 1887, at Sumter, S. C.

Mrs. Bartlett is still living, eighty-two years of age; somewhat of an invalid, with a clear mind and unfailing memory.

On the 19th of July 1841, a congregational meeting was held, at which time it was resolved to attempt to pay off the church debt, which amounted to \$1,620.27, and at the same time to raise the salary of the minister, Mr. Bartlett, to \$400, and to give the sexton \$30 for his services.

On the 26th of January the next year, (1842) a call was given to Rev. William A. Mandell, which was accepted

by him. He remained ten and a half years, preaching his last sermon as pastor of the church, September 29, 1844.

Mr. Mandell, after leaving Bridgeton, acted as City Missionary in Philadelphia for one year, went to Hinsdale, New Hampshire, to Stowe, Massachusetts; was settled in South Dartmouth for ten years; then went to Lunenburg, Massachusetts; to Cambridge, of the same State, where he now resides, eighty-one years of age, having celebrated his golden wedding.

At the beginning of this pastorate, July 30, 1842, Mr. John Mahan was elected Elder. He was ordained and installed by Rev. Ethan Osborn, but lived only eighteen months to bear the office.

At this time also, a revival of religion swept the church, and under the earnest preaching of Mr. Mandell, fifty-nine (59) were turned from their sins to Christ and united with the church, more than doubling the membership.

After the departure of Mr. Mandell, the Rev. J. H. VanDyke came to supply the pulpit for six months, and was called to the pastorate April 5, 1845, at a salary of \$400. The call was accepted and he was installed June 17, 1845.

The next year in April, he resigned on account of ill health. His resignation, however, was not accepted, and a committee was appointed to confer with him and induce him if possible to change his purpose and remain with the church.

This committee reported that the state of Mr. VanDyke's health was such that he could remain only on condition of a six month's or a year's vacation and the continuation of his salary, but that he knew that the church ought not, and could not accept the conditions.

On the 13th of April, 1846, the pastorate was therefore dissolved.

For a year and a half the pulpit was then vacant. Rev. J. L. Bartlett, of South Carolina, being stated supply for much of the time, however.

In October 1847, Mr. VanDyke was again called and installed for the second time in November of that same year. During the following two years, he, finding his views changed, determined to leave the New School branch of the church and unite with the Old. And with that purpose in view, asked Presbytery to dissolve the relation existing between himself and the Second Church, which request was granted; and the dissolution took place July 9th, 1850.

The congregation then, after much talking over the matter in private, met to consider whether it would not be a wise thing for them to sever their relation also, with the New School body and unite with the Presbytery of West Jersey. Those who had befriended and stood by the church in its weakness, were consulted; but naturally, not very much council, such as the church wanted, was given. However, after much deliberation, on September 4th, 1850, it was resolved to unite with the Presbytery of West Jersey, Old School. And in the meanwhile Mr. VanDyke was requested to supply the pulpit for six months.

As a result of this change from New School to Old, Elder Brewster, feeling that he could not conscientiously retain his place as an officer of the church, resigned from the Eldership, April 3, 1852. However, he never withdrew from the church itself, or from his earnest active work and interest in, and for it.

Another more pleasant result from this change of the

church relation was the coming of a band of very much needed, and very welcome helpers from the overflowing First Church. Some of them remain to this day, and the children's children of others have taken the places of their grandparents. The list is as follows, and there are in it the names of four Elders of the church and the wife of a fifth: Alphonso Woodruff, Mrs. Sarah Woodruff, Robert Barber, Mrs. Emily Barber, Lewis McBride, Mrs. Rebecca B. McBride, Samuel Applegit, Mrs. Jane Applegit, Mrs. Phebe Fithian, Miss Ruth James, Miss Rebecca McBride, Alexander Stratton, Alexander Kirkpatrick, Ephraim Buck.

On the twenty-fourth of March of that year, Robert Barber and Alphonso Woodruff were elected Elders, and ordained April fourth.

April 25, 1852, Mr. VanDyke finished his ministry with this church; and February 24, 1853, Mr. William E. Baker, of Wilkesbarre, Pennsylvania, was called by a unanimous vote. He accepted the call, and was ordained and installed May 18, 1853. The sermon was preached by Rev. Mr. Graham, of Woodbury. Charge to pastor, by Rev. George Janvier, of Daretown. Charge to people, by Rev. Daniel Stratton, of Salem.

During his pastorate, his uncle, Dr. Daniel Baker, began revival meetings with much success, resulting in more than eighty conversions; though not half of them united with the Second Church; the rest uniting with other churches in the town.

Mr. Baker's short ministry left an indelible impress for good. He was most heartily beloved, and under him the church began to look toward the future with greater hope than ever before.

Mr. Baker is residing at present in Roswell, Georgia,

after serving the First Presbyterian Church of Staunton, Virginia, for twenty-five years.

July 8, 1856, Rev. P. B. Heroy was called. He accepted, but remained with the church less than a year. The pulpit being declared vacant by the Presbytery May 10, 1857.

Mr. Heroy is no longer in the Church militant on earth, having some years ago passed to his rest.

The next month, June third, Rev. Joseph Hubbard was called, and was installed August fifth. Rev. Daniel Stratton preached the sermon. The charge to the pastor was given by Rev. Thos. W. Cattell. Charge to the people by Rev. S. J. Baird, while Rev. S. K. Kollock, presided.

May 30, 1858, Jesse D. Claypole was elected Elder, and so served the church until his dismissal to the Arch Street Church, Philadelphia, in 1863. He afterward took an active interest in the organization of the West Presbyterian Church of this city, and was an Elder of it until his death.

May 27, 1860, Lewis McBride, Joel Fithian and Samuel Applegit were elected Elders. Of these Mr. Applegit resigned March 18, 1885, and both he and Mr. McBride have passed away.

During Mr. Hubbard's pastorate and by his efforts the present parsonage was bought at an expense of about \$4,000.

Mr. Hubbard resigned to Presbytery April 19, 1865, in order to take charge of the church at Cape May. From there he went to Dayton, New Jersey, and is now pastor at Mechanicsville, Iowa.

Mr. Heber H. Beadle, the present pastor of the church, was ordained and installed June 20, 1866. Rev. Chas.

Wood, moderated the service. Rev. Charles McMullen preached the sermon. Rev. Edward P. Shields, gave the charge to the people, and Rev. Elias R. Beadle, D. D. L.L. D., of the Second Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia gave the charge to the pastor, his son.

Mr. Beadle was the son of a missionary, and born in Smyrna, Asia Minor. He graduated at Yale University in the class of 1862, went to Geneva, studied under Dr. Merele D'Aubigue, for two years; then to the College of the Free Church of Edinburg, where he received his license to preach.

The work was begun by him under many discouragements, but matters brightened with the years, and the little edifice for the first time began to be too small, and it was found necessary to enlarge in order to accommodate the growth.

In the winter of 68-69, \$8,000 were expended in the enlargement of the building. The outside stairway at the entrance, very awkward and exposed to all the rains, was taken down and a new and much more convenient and sightly entrance was built in its place. A new door was cut into the Sabbath School room, and the old doors closed. The church was lengthened out in the rear. The choir was placed on an elevated platform behind the pulpit and an Estey pedel organ was used to lead the voices in place of the old melodeon. The original instrument is still doing most beautiful service in one of our homes, training the children's voices for church work.

The first service in the enlarged building was on May 2, 1869, and was both a Thanksgiving and a Communion service, entered into with hearts full of praise. Thirty-three united with the church that morning on confession

of their faith and seven by letter. On March 2, 1878, thirty-seven united on confession of faith and seven by letter. Again on March 4, 1883, thirty-five confessed their faith in Christ and five brought letters from other churches. On March 2, 1888, thirty-six united with the church on confession of faith, and the next year seventy-eight, the largest number in the history of the church. These additions with the usual additions at intervening Communion seasons, soon filled the enlarged building and again the church was troubled for room. The best that could be done for the time, was done. The gallery was cushioned, and \$5,000 was expended in that and other improvements, (in 1883.) The church was painted and frescoed, a pipe organ with water motor was built in at an expense of \$2,700. (\$500 more were expended on this organ in 1892, in adding new pipes.)

On the 30th of October 1885, Thos. U. Harris and Benjamin F. Harding were elected Elders; and in September 1891, Judge Alphonso Woodruff, for nearly forty years Elder of the church, was taken away by death at the age of eighty-two years.

In the winter of 1891, the lecture room was re-seated and the old benches which had held their place in all their sturdy strength and ungainliness, were banished to make room for something more modern and comfortable.

In the report to the General Assembly for 1891, there were 464 members of the Church; 373 in the Sunday Schools, and \$1,314 were given for benevolent purposes.

Here ends the story of the Second Church for the present. It now is growing quietly and steadily. There is the usual narrative of additions, and dismissals to other churches on earth and to the great church in the New Jerusalem above.

There are the usual sorrows and songs that come to every church life, the usual efforts and partial success or failure. There are above all, the boundless blessings that have come from a Heavenly Father's bounty, which have been continued from year to year, and have made us always glad; and for these we give hearty thanks and pray for a long continuance.



**History of the First Church, from the Pastorate of Rev. C. R. Gregory, D. D., to the Present Time, by Rev. Sylvester W. Beach.**

This paper will not occupy much time. It deals largely with the recent past, and the facts are familiar to us all. The period is a short one, covering mainly but three pastorates of less than a quarter century in extent.

An earnest and most worthy Methodist lately declared to the writer, that the proposed extension of the pastoral tenure in the Methodist Episcopal church would never be popular or practicable among the people of that denomination. The system of itineracy, he said, had the obvious advantage of giving a rapid succession of pastorates, an advantage due to the fact that each minister has gifts and graces peculiar to himself, while none combines perfect excellence of all kinds. One is a good pastor, another is a good preacher; one reaches the cultured, another the common classes; one builds up the finances, another the spirituality of the church. Any one man must bring forth an imperfect product. All together may reach a composite result approximating the ideal. Thus one pastor complements another till all sides of the walls of Zion are established. Methodists, he declared, want composite pastors, and these can be had only in many pastors. Without entering into the merits of this growing question now agitating a sister denomination, we may confidently say that the First church, Bridgeton, has been served by a succession of pastors who have strikingly supplemented each other in the gifts and graces of the pastoral office. For example, Dr. Casper R. Gregory, called to follow that Nestor of Bridgeton Presbyterianism, Dr. Samuel Beach Jones, proved the latter's fitting counterpart. Dr. Jones

was distinguished for his dignity, Dr. Gregory for his approachableness; Dr. Jones for his oratory, Dr. Gregory for his colloquialism; Dr. Jones for his indoctrination, Dr. Gregory, for his persuasion; Dr. Jones, for his diplomacy, Dr. Gregory, for his naivete. It was a hard task to follow Dr. Jones, "for what can the man do that cometh after the King?" But Dr. Gregory was adapted for that particular work, so far as any man could have been. He became pastor May 12, 1864. He was a native of Philadelphia, educated at the University of Pennsylvania and Princeton Seminary. He was just forty years of age when he came to Bridgeton; but he was already a man of much experience, first as teacher, then as foreign missionary among the Choctaw Indians, later on pastor for ten years of the Presbyterian church at Oneida, N. Y. His pastorate here continued for over nine years. His ministry was specially blessed in awakening the unconverted. The year after he became pastor the church received fifty additions. In the first two years the accessions reached one hundred and thirty, Alfred Holmes, John T. Pierce and James J. Reeves were installed elders during his pastorate; Robert M. Seeley, Edwin M. Ware, Dr. William Elmer, Jr., John M. Laning, Charles S. Fithian and Wm. E. Potter were elected trustees. The parsonage was purchased for him at a cost of \$5,500. The most important event of Dr. Gregory's pastorate was the organization of the West Church in 1869. The First Church congregation being so increased that there was no longer room for growth, and the interests of Presbyterianism seeming to demand a church upon the west side of the Cohansey, one hundred and thirteen members of the First Church took letters of dismission, March 15, 1869, and on the next day, they,

together with four members from the Second Church, were organized into the West Presbyterian church.

In 1873, through the persistent efforts of Dr. Gregory, who was a devoted lover of music, a grand Hook & Hastings organ was bought for the First Church at a cost of \$3,500. The First Church choir long before, under the leadership first of Joseph Reeves, and then of Robert DuBois, had obtained an enviable reputation, and was now well equipped for the fine work that it has continued until the present to perform under the able leadership of Thomas R. Janvier. In 1873 Dr. Gregory was called to Lincoln University, to fill the chair of Sacred Rhetoric. There he labored zealously and most successfully until his death, which occurred February 26th, 1882. His end was full of faith and hope. His body lies here in the Pastor's lot beside three other pastors who preached the Gospel to the same beloved church.

After Dr. Gregory's resignation an interim of exactly seven months followed. The Rev. J. Allen Maxwell, D. D., was installed May 7, 1874.

Two pastoral terms preceded that of Bridgeton in his ministry. The first was in South Orange, N. J., which continued for ten years; the other at Hazelton, Pa. His birthplace was New York City, December 29th, 1833. He graduated at the University of New York and Union Theological Seminary.

Dr. Maxwell is well remembered by nearly all who are now before me. He was a minister of the Word, of singular gifts. His sermons were laboriously wrought out, and delivered with an unaffected simplicity that gave the impression of great reserved powers; and yet he did not lack an unction indicated in voice and manner. He was a scholar of no mean attainments, and had found

an opportunity to go afield in his reading and research beyond what is possible to most busy pastors. While not compromising the dignity of his ministerial office, he closely identified himself with the public interests of the community, and was zealous in promoting every movement of municipal and moral reform. His talents were not unfrequently employed in the preparation and delivery of public lectures, and in writing for the local and religious press. In a word, he was indefatigable in his labors, and most versatile in his gifts and accomplishments. Above all, his gentle and sweet disposition, and his pure heart filled with the spirit of God, are remembered.

During Dr. Maxwell's pastorate, the church was refurnished and beautified at a cost of nearly \$3,000; the parsonage was also greatly improved.

W. Harrison Woodruff was elected to the Board of Trustees. Isaac Laning, Edgar J. Riley and Theophilus Trenchard were installed as Elders.

From Bridgeton, Dr. Maxwell removed to Titusville, Pennsylvania, February, 1881. After a happy pastorate there of six years, he was called to Danbury, Connecticut, where he was a greatly beloved pastor, when summoned by the Angel of Death, on Thanksgiving morning, 1890.

The Rev. Augustus Brodhead, D. D., who took up the work which Dr. Maxwell's hands dropped, only three months after the latter's removal, was the son of Hon. H. and Eliza Ross Brodhead, of Milford, Pennsylvania. He was born May 13, 1831. His collegiate course was pursued at Union College, Schenectady, N. Y., and he studied Theology at Princeton. He was ordained as an evangelist for foreign mission work by the Presbytery of Hudson, May 4, 1858. He sailed for India that fall. At Mynpu-

rie and Fatehgarh thirteen years were spent in preaching, teaching, ministering to the native churches, and organizing evangelistic efforts. He was then transferred to Allabahad, where he took up the laborious work of teaching theology, writing text books on Church History and other subjects. At length a succession of severe attacks of illness made it evident to his medical advisers and the members of the mission, that his constitution would not much longer be able to bear the strain of the Indian climate. Very reluctantly he yielded to the necessity, and in 1878 resigned the service of the mission and returned to America, where after several temporary engagements, he accepted a call to Bridgeton, as we have said, just three months after the resignation of Dr. Maxwell.

As a linguist, oriental scholar, missionary, pastor and typical Christian man, Dr. Brodhead wielded a great influence wherever his name was known. He was at the time of his death, member for this Presbytery of that most important of Synod's enterprises, the Synodical Home Missions; and his journeys to their distant meetings while in rapidly failing health, bore witness to the fervency of his love for the church at home, as he had given the best of his life to the church in India. City Missions in Bridgeton also knew him for a true helper. Almost the last public act of his life, when he was too ill to walk to and from the place of meeting, was to assist at the dedication of the new East Side Chapel. His last communion with the church was in March, 1887. Soon after he was obliged to let go his work, hoping to gain relief and rest at Clifton Springs. Finding no help there, he went to Toronto, hoping a more northern atmosphere might mitigate his sufferings. But his work was over;

for "after some weeks of patient yet hopeful suffering, with a clear trust in God and a hearty resignation to His will, he slept through the night and awoke in Heaven." The date of his death was August 29th, and his body being removed to Bridgeton, his funeral took place in the First Church, September 2nd.

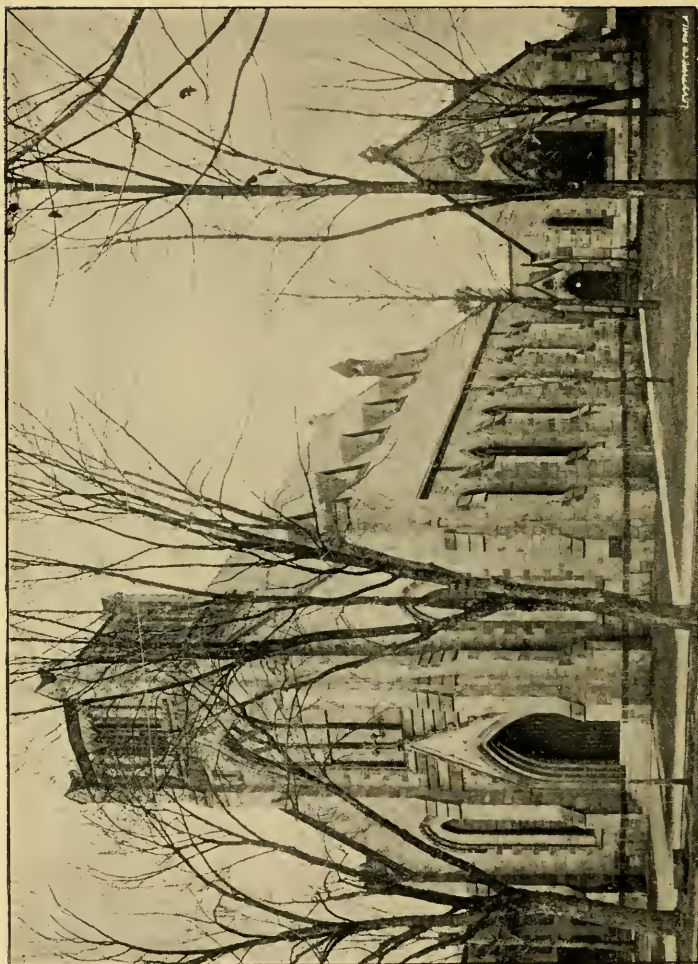
It was during the pastorate of Dr. Brodhead that our present handsome chapel was built at a cost of \$9,000. The corner stone was laid by Dr. Brodhead, August 8, 1883, and the building was completed in March, 1884. The committee in charge of the work were: R. M. Seeley, C. E. Mulford, C. R. Corey, Theodore E. Edwards and P. K. Reeves.

During this pastorate there was only one change in the Board of Trustees. Mr. Francis B. Minch, the present President and Treasurer, being elected in place of Jonathan Elmer, resigned

The present pastor was installed December 19, 1887. Since that time Howard W. Fithian and Charles F. Dare have been elected to the Board of Trustees, and P. Kennedy Reeves and J. Ogden Burt ordained and installed as Elders. The debt on the chapel has been entirely paid and one hundred and ninety-eight members have been added to the church.







WEST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.



## History of the West Church by Rev. William J. Bridges.

The West Church, the third of the Presbyterian Churches of Bridgeton, feels an intense affection for the old Broad street Church, and naturally enough, for it was its grandmother. We reckon three generations to the century, then, the mother church, was the one worshipping here, from 1792 to 1825 or 30, the daughter the First Church, as located on Laurel street, and the granddaughter the West Church, born in March 1868. Of course, there will be those who will say, nay, verily! but the West is the daughter, the old church has never had but one set of children, and they were the Second and the West. But we make the assertion, by way of concession to the First Church, none of whose members, and certainly none of whose lady members, wish to be written down to-day, as in the shadow of a hundred years of age. We think it better to look upon the First Church as a matron in middle life, walking by the side of this fair daughter of twenty-two. You can't call a girl of that age old; we don't want to call any one who poses as her mother old, and the grandmother idea seems to be suggestive of peace all around.

It is only history repeating itself, domestic history we mean; to say the child was born at grandmother's house, for the West Church first saw the light in this venerable building. Here in March, 1868, the first congregational meeting was held, looking toward its establishment. A Building Committee was appointed, consisting of Messrs. Jesse D. Claypoole, Dr. John B. Bowen, Wm. G. Nixon, James J. Reeves, David P. Elmer, Uriah D. Woodruff, Dr. William Elmer, Jr., and Edwin M. Ware, good men these, who builded better than they knew. In April,

1868, the West Church Sabbath School began in this building, and continued here, until its own chapel was ready for use. Here is an illustration for our Irving avenue brethren, of a Sabbath School preceding a church.

The masonry work on the chapel, began on the 11th of August, 1868. In February, 1869, there was a movement towards the organization of a church. In March of the same year, the church was organized by Presbytery with a membership of one hundred and seventeen, one hundred and thirteen of whom came from the First Church, and four from the Second. It is comparatively easy to understand how the First Church in the largeness of its heart, was ready to give the one hundred and thirteen, but how any one ever got away those four members from Brother Beadle, no history explains, and he himself, seems to have gone away from us to-day, on purpose that he might avoid explaining.

On March 16, 1869, the first Session consisting of Messrs. Jesse D. Claypoole, A. Smith Woodruff, and Dr. William Elmer, Jr., having been elected, was duly ordained and installed. One of these, Mr. A. Smith Woodruff is yet in office, and attentive to his duties. They were all good workers, and their work abides.

Church and Sabbath School services, were held by the West Church congregation, in this building, and Friday night Prayer Meeting in Sheppard's Hall, until the chapel was opened and dedicated.

The dedication occurred on Sabbath July 4th, 1869, and this patriotic date, with its direct reference to country, prompts us to stop for a moment, and recall some of those things which our progenitors had to think about on week days, as the work of the church went on, and which it may be, if the sermon was not lively, they thought about on Sunday.

From the inception of the church unto the dedication, Vice-President Andrew Johnson who had become President, through the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, was filling that office, for his last year ending March 4th, 1869. In the month of March, 1868, when the church was first thought of, President Johnson was impeached by the House of Representatives, for high crimes and misdemeanors, because of a controversy which arose between him and Congress, respecting the terms on which the late Confederate States should be reconstructed or restored to their original relations to the Federal Union. He was acquitted in May.

On the 25th of December 1869, at the time when the first festival was held in the West Chapel, the President of the United States, issued a proclamation of general amnesty, announcing that the authority of the Federal government had been re-established in all the seceding States, and granting pardon to all who had taken part in the so-called rebellion. On the 4th of March, 1869, or four months previous to the dedication of the chapel, Ulysses S. Grant, and Schuyler Colfax were inaugurated President and Vice-President of the United States.

So you see our fathers and brethren had much to think of during the week as well as on Sunday. Moreover the years of the beginning of the West Church, were the years just following the war, and when one remembers the bitter animosities, the sufferings and losses it entailed, it always seems to us a happy coincidence, that this date, July 4th, 1869, God's day and our country's natal day, were thus blended with the day of occupation and of dedication of our church to invite us from war's alarms to "The rest that remaineth for the people of God," to point to a yet better country than America, to place the

emblem of the cross above that of the stars and stripes, and to win us to grander liberty than American citizens as such enjoy, even to be free in Christ.

The corner stone of the larger church building was laid Saturday July 3rd, 1869, the day before the dedication of the chapel. It was a hot afternoon, yet a good number of persons assembled at the south-east corner of the church building; they stood under the maple trees, umbrellas in hand. The ministers sat upon an improvised platform, over which was placed as an awning, the national standard. The ministers in all ages of the world seem to have matters very lovely; seats are often found for them while the laymen must stand, and this has sometimes provoked the evilly disposed among the brethren to sit on the ministry. The Revs Messrs. McNeil, Beadle, Jones, Stratton, Gregory, Harris, Moffitt and Heydenreich, were among those present. The exercises commenced with an appropriate prayer by Mr. Beadle, after which Mr. McNeil read the hymn of dedication which had been composed for the occasion, and which was sung under the leadership of Mr. Robert Young. Rev. C. R. Gregory read a selected chapter from the Scriptures; and then Dr. Wm. Elmer, Jr., gave a history of the church from the beginning. Nearly all that has been said in this sketch to-day, all that was good, came from this address. Then Mr. Franklin F. Westcott spoke of the religious and political connections of the day, said that a town without a church would be a town filled with evil; said, and it was well said too, that the chief business of the church was not to teach men how to die, but how to live. The destiny of the country is bound up with that of the church, the wounds that hurt the church make the State bleed as well. Then

Rev. Mr. Gregory deposited in the cornerstone a number of articles which are specified in the record, and the stone was fixed in place. Rev. Dr. Moffitt then spoke, "What was meant by these ceremonies," he said, "was not the consecration of a spot of earth, to make it holier than before, or fit for God to dwell in, but that it was simply their purpose that that house should be set apart for his worship; and as Christ had said, that 'where two or three are gathered together, there he is,' so they confidently believed, that those who should hereafter worship there would enjoy that blessing, not because of their act, but because of God's promise." The Rev. Mr. Harris then prayed, and the Rev. Wallace Stratton pronounced the benediction.

For seven years after the dedication of the chapel, the church building was enclosed, and ready for interior finish, but not occupied. We suppose this was owing to a disposition not to incur debt, and happy is that people, in or out of the church who live by this silver rule. "Mr. Speaker," said the eccentric Randolph of Roanoke, "I have discovered the philosopher's stone; it consists of four short words of homely English, and is 'pay as you go.' "

The dedication services of the church took place Thursday, April 11th, 1878, at three o'clock in the afternoon. The pastor, Mr. Coyle, the Revs. Messrs. Ferguson, Beadle and Maxwell took part in the other services, and the Rev. Mr. Colfelt of Philadelphia, preached the sermon. By this dedication, the work was renewedly offered to the Lord, and with enlarged facilities, it was taken up with increased heartiness. In the sweet May morn, and the golden summer, mid the gleanings of autumn and winter's cold, Christ was set forth, not the Christ of envy or contention, but the Christ of love and

truth. The people were responsive, the membership increased, and there were added unto the Lord as we believe, those whom he will count as his own in the day when he shall make up his jewels.

The West Church has had three pastors, the Rev. L. E. Coyle, Rev. W. H. Belden, and the speaker. Mr. Coyle was ordained and installed Thursday evening, April 28, 1870; he served the church for thirteen years, resigning his charge, April 18th, 1883. One cannot speak as freely of the living as these other speakers have of those out of hearing, but the more we know of Mr. Coyle's work, and of his character, the more of an exalted opinion do we have of both. The congregation was pastorless for eight months, a critical time to any church; happy that Session and congregation who can the quickest secure a new pastor. The Rev. Wm. H. Belden was installed Monday evening, February 4th, 1884. His pastorate extended over six years and two months, he resigning the pulpit April 1, 1890. A zealous, capable, true-hearted missionary spirit; one can only understand the trial that has come to him, by remembering that "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth."

Having thus disposed of his predecessors, the present pastor might chronologically speak of himself; this modesty utterly forbids, save to say, that the beginning and the end of Presbyterianism in Bridgeton, is confined to his family, for not one century ago, but two, the Rev. Thomas Bridge, or Bridges, settled in these parts as a Presbyterian minister. He came with a patent or deed for a thousand acres of land about North Bridgeton. What any minister would want with so much Jersey land, we know not, may be he put the sand into his sermons, and why he came at all, history does not tell

us. We do not harbor the suspicion that King William of Orange, would offer the good man that sum just to be rid of him. When we first came to Bridgeton, we were of course, pleased to know that one of the family had already been here, and at so early a date, to look after the interests of Presbyterianism, and this led us ambitiously to hope, that this place had been called after him, or that Bridgeton had received its name from the Bridges family; but the Potter family who make history, about Bridgeton, have compelled us to relinquish this pleasing thought. We are glad, though, that if they would name so pretty a town as this after a wooden bridge, there is no imputation that the original Rev. Thomas Bridges, whom they would not name it after, was a wooden man.

As to increase of members, like its sister churches, there have been times of gain to the West Church, times when it seemed to stand still, and times of going backward; but throughout the years of gain, healthful gain, and as the years have gone on, nothing has been pleasanter than the admission of the young from the Sabbath School, the nursery of the church, into the church; christians from the Sabbath School must always be the best. The proportion of young people in the church, is more than one-third that of the whole number, and their influence is felt in all departments of church work. Particularly in the Christian Endeavor Society, now nearly four years old, do the young people find a sphere for their activity. This society does wonders for them; it keeps them at work, it leads them to an active part in the public service, keeps them united. In disposing of its history in this brief way, the pastor has nothing but good to say of the Christian Endeavor Society.



The ladies, what would church or pastor do without them, have always taken an exceedingly active part in the Home and Foreign Missionary work of the church. Meetings for each cause are held at intervals of three weeks during the year. Boxes of useful articles are constantly being sent to ministers who need. These are far more than ordinarily valuable, and the amount of money raised by the societies is unusually large; besides this the members are constantly informing themselves of the missionary state of the world, and making the knowledge gained, the subject of interesting communication. Gladly are they hearing and acting upon the Saviour's last command, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature."

This church is easily among the first in the Presbytery in the absolute amount raised per member for such purposes. It is thus listening to the saying, "Freely ye have received, freely give."

As for Elders and Trustees, no pastor ever had better.

From the nature of the case, the real history of a church cannot be written on earth but will be in the skies; it must be assigned to eternity, rather than to time; here matters are mutable, there fixed; here they must be attempted by those, who, in the nature of the case, cannot know all the facts, but in the coming clearer light we shall see as we are seen, and know as we are known. If it should appear, at that time, that this church displayed anything of love for the Master, what joy! If any prayer there put up led any one to say, "I must have this pardon or I die," how hearts will thrill! If the kindly word of invitation arrested any wandering footstep, blissful day. But if these pastors meet there any considerable number of those unto whom they have spoken,



surely to each of them their heaven will be three heavens, in the land of the King.

And that God, who satisfies with food the appetite of the hungry, and who makes us to love, and who finds for us a mate, has not bidden the pastor's heart to long for souls in vain. The time may seem long, the work dull, the response trifling, but in countless ways we think not of, the seed sown will be upspringing, the sunshine of God will invigorate, the dew of his grace bless. And this will be, not because of our faithfulness, but because of the faithfulness of God.

And even about us, we have the earnest of this. Here sleep those, who worshipped with us, who mingled their prayers with ours. They witnessed a good profession, and in the last and crucial hour of their lives, they did not give up their Christ, but clung to him to the end. These said, that the Gospel which they heard proclaimed was a perfect one; they might have heard the Gospel better preached elsewhere, but they did not hear a better Gospel. These said, that Jesus was as ready to save here, as elsewhere, the Holy Spirit as ready to bless.

May men everywhere believe in the need of the great salvation, and in the efficiency of the church as blessed of Him, to lead thereto, and when the history of this church is finally written, may it prove to have been useful.

**History of the West Jersey Academy, by  
Prof. Phoebus W. Lyon.**

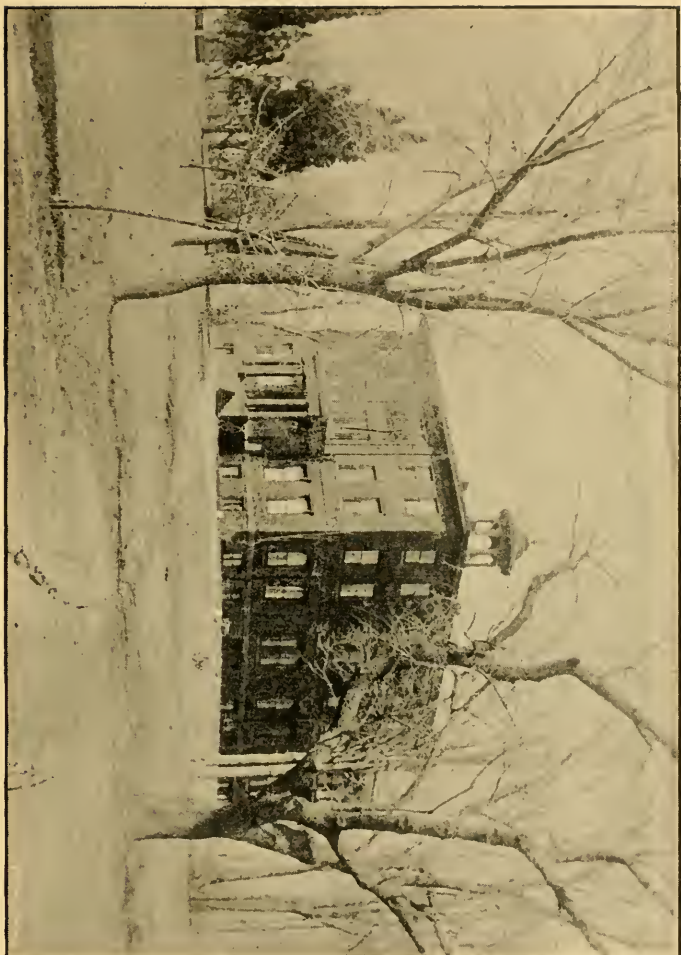
The ancient Greeks represent Venus as rising from the sea a full-grown, perfect woman, ready to enter upon the work of life; they fancy Minerva as springing, full-armed, from the brain of Jove, and in her suddenly acquired maturity ready to direct in counsel or in war; they tell us that Cadmus sowed the dragon's teeth, and forth with sprung up panoplied soldiers, ready to fight. But God has not so made the world. That which is good has come through growth, and growth is gradual. First the blade, then the ear and after that the full-corn in the ear. Throes and anguish precede birth, and the birth is of a child, helpless in itself and needful of care, and nursing and direction, and making heavy and constant demands on the time and the toil, the patience and the pocket of those interested in its welfare, through years of childhood and of youth, ere its maturity shall come and it is able to stand alone.

Such is the history of all enterprises in this world, such, as we have heard to-day, has been the history of these Presbyterian churches of Bridgeton, and such, through four decades, has been the history of the West Jersey Academy.

The Presbyterians, the Congregationalists and the Quakers, who were the first English speaking settlers in The Jerseys, began their schools when they began their churches.

In 1676 it is at a Jersey town-meeting that it was resolved that:

"The town doth consent that the town's men should perfect the  
"bargain with the schoolmaster for this year upon condition that  
"he will come and do his faithful honest and true endeavor to



WEST JERSEY ACADEMY.



"teach the children or servants of those who have subscribed, the reading and writing of English, and also of arithmetic if they desire it, as much as they are capable to learn and be capable to teach them within the compass of this year, nowise hindering but that he may make what bargain he please with those as have not subscribed."

And a few years later the town meeting records say (Sept. 28th, 1714.)

"Ordered by vote that ye old floor in ye meeting-house should be made use of for ye making a floor in ye school house in ye middle of ye town."

It was in keeping with these precedents and of the constant interest in the education of her children shown by the church from that early day to our own, that Dr. Samuel Beach Jones on the 16th of April, 1850, presented to the West Jersey Presbytery a paper looking to the establishment of a high grade Academy within its bounds and to be permanently under its fostering care and supervision. This paper was a very able and convincing one, and the Presbytery in a series of resolutions adopted its recommendations and elected the first Board of Trustees. This Board consisted of: Rev. Dr. S. Beach Jones, David P. Elmer, Dr. Enoch Fithian, Calvin Belden, Henry B. Lupton, Moses Richman, Jr., John T. Nixon, Dr. Jacob W. Ludlam, Charles E. Elmer, Enoch Edmonds, William G. Nixon, Geo. S. Woodhull, Dr. J. Barron Potter, Dr. R. Rush Bateman, Dr. Ephraim Buck, Dr. Wm. B. Ewing, Lewis McBride, Lewis Mulford, Dr. William Elmer, Dr. Joseph Fithian.

On the 11th of the following July, (1850) this Board of Trustees met in the Presbyterian Session House in this city, and after much deliberation, not forgetting prayer for divine guidance and blessing, issued a circular and subscription blank, a copy of which is hereto appended.

CIRCULAR FROM THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD OF  
THE PRESBYTERIAN ACADEMY OF WEST JERSEY.

*Action of the Presbytery.* At the last stated meeting of the Presbytery of West Jersey, it was determined by that body to establish a classical and scientific Academy of a high order, and to locate it in Bridgeton. The unanimity with which both of these decisions were made, indicated the pervading sense of the importance of such an institution, and the eligibility of the place selected as its site.

*Reasons for this action.* Within the six counties over which the Presbytery is spread, there now exists no Academy of the grade and character which we need. Most of our youth, who seek a liberal education, are compelled to prosecute their more advanced studies out of our bounds and remote from our supervision; some who desire such an education are compelled to forego it, because of the expense attendant on its prosecution at a distance. The academies occasionally established by private enterprise have always proved short lived; and thus the steady advance of education in its higher departments is impeded.

*Advantages of such an Institution.*—An Academy under the supervision and the control of the Presbytery will be likely to prove as permanent as the body which founds it. It promises to give to religious culture the place which it properly claims in every stage of education. It will educate our youth near their homes; and its very proximity to most of our congregations and neighborhoods will induce a larger number of West Jerseymen to seek a liberal education; and thus serve to raise West Jersey to something like an equality with other portions of our State and country. It places both teachers and the course of study pursued under the supervision of educated and responsible men. It furnishes a reasonable prospect of greater facilities for the acquisition of the higher branches of academical education, than we can well expect elsewhere; inasmuch as the more extensive patronage afforded by our own and other regions will enable us to employ teachers accomplished for their vocation. It will afford to our young men a good school in which to train themselves for the employment of teaching.

*The place selected.* The selection of Bridgeton as the seat of an Academy was made in view of its central position, as to most of

our congregations; its business relations to most of the towns in West Jersey, and its accessibility to them by public conveyances; and also in the prospect of a liberal subscription towards the Institution from the residents of that place.

*The Board of Trustees and its action.* A Board of Twenty Trustees, selected from different congregations belonging to the Presbytery, was duly appointed in April last. At a recent meeting of the Board, an Executive Committee, consisting of the undersigned, was appointed to make an estimate of the probable cost of a suitable lot and buildings for the contemplated Academy, and to take immediate measures for the securing of funds for said objects. At the same time the Board appointed committees in each congregation, to solicit contributions in their respective neighborhoods; and the undersigned were directed to address to them a communication on this subject.

We therefore report to you, that we now have it in our power to secure, if adequate funds be provided, the most eligible site for a school known to us in this region of country. It is a lot within the precincts of Bridgeton, comprising about ten acres of the highest ground in our town, and constituting a whole square, without any liability to be encroached upon by buildings; and withal, as airy and healthful as it is beautiful. We propose to erect near the centre and upon the highest point in this lot, a building adapted to a Boarding School, which is indispensable to the realization of the design of the Presbytery.

To purchase the site and erect the buildings it is estimated that at least Ten Thousand Dollars will be required. We propose that the subscriptions be made on the condition that at least Eight Thousand Dollars shall be subscribed before any part thereof shall be payable.

We would in the name of the Trustees respectfully and earnestly request your aid in this important undertaking; believing, as we do, that with due diligence the work may be accomplished, and that it promises inestimable benefits, religious and intellectual, to this portion of West Jersey. It is exceedingly desirable that subscriptions be secured as promptly as possible, so that an early report may be made to the Board of Trustees, which now awaits the result of your and our labours.

Be pleased, therefore, to apprise us, at as early a date as practi-

cable, of your success, by addressing Wm. G. Nixon, the Chairman of the Executive Committee,

SAMUEL BEACH JONES,  
WILLIAM ELMER,  
WILLIAM G. NIXON,  
LEWIS McBRIDE,  
HENRY B. LUPTON,  
DAVID P. ELMER,  
EPHRAIM BUCK,  
Executive Committee.

We, the undersigned, hereby agree to contribute the sums affixed to our names, towards the amount of Ten Thousand Dollars to be raised for the erection of an Academy under the supervision of the Presbytery of West Jersey; one-half to be paid when the subscriptions shall amount to Eight Thousand Dollars; and the remainder in six months from that time.

Dr. William Elmer headed the subscription with his name for one thousand dollars, and others followed with liberality according to and beyond their means. But two years slipped away before sufficient money had been subscribed to permit of further progress and when on April 30th, 1852, a second meeting of the Board was held, it was found that the total subscription only amounted to \$8,416; three-fourths of which was from Bridgeton, about \$1,600 from other congregations in West Jersey, and between five and six hundred dollars from friends of the enterprise in Philadelphia and New York. Outside of Bridgeton, Pittsgrove was the banner town in giving, and in the very full and very valuable memorandum kept by the long time friend of the Academy, Dr. J. Barron Potter, whose recent death we all mourn to-day, the following list may be found which shows how faithfully the work was done: 3 subscriptions, \$125.00; 1 ten dollar note, \$10.00; 8 cards, \$35.00; 13 one dollar notes, \$13.00; 4 half dollars, \$2.00; 4 dimes, .40; 36 quarters,



\$9.00; 13 half-dimes, .65; 2 gold dollars, \$2.00; 56 three-cent pieces, \$1.78; 12 levies, \$1.50; 24 pennies, .24; 8 fips, .50. In all; 159 contributions amounting to \$200.57.

Meanwhile an act of incorporation had been secured (Feb. 19, 1852,) and the lot, since known as Academy Hill, provisionally purchased at a cost of \$1,625.50.

On the 26th of April of that same year, the whole of the Executive Committee with some other friends of the enterprise met on the hill and agreed upon and staked out the site for the building, and all these succeeding years have vindicated their selection, for a more perfectly located school is not to be found, dare we say, in these United States.

On the 9th of August, 1852, the corner-stone was laid with much ceremony, with the following program:

Invocation,	Rev. G. W. Janvier, Pittsgrove.
Reading of Scripture, "Except the Lord build the house, etc."	Dr. Jones.
Singing, 127 Psalm.—(Tune "Uxbridge.")	
Prayer,	Dr. Kollock, of Greenwich.
Addresses,	Dr. C. VanRensalaer, of Philadelphia; Dr. Wm. B. Ewing, of Greenwich
Statement of Financial Condition and Collection.	
Laying of Corner stone,	Dr. Jones.
Prayer,	Rev. Mr. Graham, of Woodbury.
Singing, "All hail the power of Jesus Name,"	
Benediction,	Dr. VanRensalaer.

And thus the child was born! Ah, but there was infancy yet before the child could talk, and "through the slippery paths of youth" with changes all too frequent of nurse and governess, the child was to be conducted unto man's estate.

I may not take time to-day to tell of these eventful years. At some other time, perhaps by some other and better qualified pen, this history should be written and preserved.

How full of interest and of incident would such a history be! How we sigh with one of the early Principals as we hear his plaint, "The experience of the past year has convinced me that the office involves too much oppressive labor for me to fill properly." How we smile when we read that the Board resolved,

"That, in order to prevent many inconveniences which often arise in boarding schools, from the introduction of foreign bedding and to maintain that degree of cleanliness and order, which we trust may characterize this institution, henceforth the bed and bedding shall be furnished by the Principal and none other introduced."

And how, when this expedient failed, the Principal—poor man—not being able to furnish the amount of bedding required, it was resolved that

"Different churches of the Presbytery be requested to furnish each a room "

Many of the churches responded right loyally to this request, and barring a little incongruity of style and variation of color the rooms thus provided for were well equipped. And some of the thoughtful dames,—may their daughters be worthy of their mothers!—intent on helping the souls as well as the bodies of the dear boys, deftly sewed scripture texts in with the hems of the bedding, and as John or Tom or Enoch, woke in the morning wondering what he was to get for breakfast, he could read on the edge of his sheet, "Be content with such things as you have," or, ere he threw his pillow at Ed., who was similarly armed, he was encouraged by the motto on the case to "Fight the good fight of faith."

On motion, too, it was resolved,

"That—all damages done to the school building, furniture or other property of the Academy, shall be paid by the person or persons committing the same when known and if unknown, that it shall be the duty of the Principal to assess the said damage upon all the scholars in the Academy at the time of the offense."

In accordance with this we find in 1861, that a tax amounting to \$4.50 was levied on all the members of the school. Again, we find a committee on reseating the school-room reporting that they had proceeded with the necessary work not yet knowing its cost, relying upon the Board to devise some way to pay the expense.

Another Principal very suggestively remarks that "some of the Directors have been pleased to compliment my garden, which shows the result of careful culture, and yet my labors in the garden were mostly for recreation and from love of the work. With equal or greater love of teaching and with far greater labor, care and thought bestowed upon my school, I ought to have far higher compliment and far greater encouragement."

But we must not linger over these tempting incidents. Nine different Principals—Smythe, Stevenson, Thompson, Gosman, Whitely, Diefendorf, Vaughan, Sherman, Allen and Lyon,—have through these years been in succession at the head of the school. Through storm and through sunshine, among rocks and over smooth seas they have guided the craft, and to-day she still sails on, staunch in timber, stronger in crew, and with as large a passenger list as at any time in all the past.

When on July 4th, 1776, the patriotic citizens of Philadelphia, heard that the Declaration, that has since become so famous, had been signed, they rang their bell and shouted out their joy. At the same time a courier started from the opposite shore and carried along the news and the shout till he reached the young hamlet on the Cohansey. And then the farmers from the country round rejoiced and shouted and rang aloud their bell. But with more judgment than the Quakers of the city of Brotherly Love, they did not spoil it for future use and

that same bell still hangs above yonder Academy, and daily calls the boys with its patriotic tongue.

Thus we look back to the past, thus we consider the present and thus with the fullest confidence in the God who has helped through that past and is helping in this present, we look toward the future and take courage.

**History of Pearl Street Mission and East  
Bridgeton Chapel, by P. Kennedy  
Reeves.**

At the close of the war of the Rebellion, philanthropists had an opportunity to remove their field of operations from the battle ground and the hospital to places nearer home. In the early months of 1866, the attention of good people of Bridgeton was called to the numbers of children spending the Sabbath in wandering through the streets, playing on the wharves or lounging on the bridges. Some ladies looked into the dwelling places of these children, and found that while not houseless, many were practically homeless. Their domiciles were repulsive. One mother of five boys stated she didn't care where her boys went Sundays, so they were out of her sight; she usually put them out of doors Sunday morning and they went where they pleased. Another actually told her visitor she wished her boy was dead; and only the fear of the law kept her from killing him. Is it any wonder such words and sights made the hearts of Godly, motherly women ache for the boys whose young lives were being blasted by such influences?

As Mrs. M. S. Fithian passed the corner of Commerce and Laurel streets one Sabbath morning, twenty-six years ago, she encountered a crowd of barefooted rag-amuffins fighting and swearing as usual, but who paused to listen to her invitation to come to the Session House on Pearl street, later in the day. They accepted the invitation and kept the appointment and finally consented to regularly attend a Sabbath School if one could be organized expressly for them. Interest in the waifs increased; money was contributed, and a lot on South Pearl street purchased for \$500. A building was erected

costing about \$1,400. In two years it became necessary to make an addition, at an expense of \$200. A second time it was enlarged, the improvement costing \$1,000; and recently it was enlarged again at an expenditure of \$834, the entire amount being collected by the ladies interested.

From the first, this work has been among a class who have not been blessed with this world's goods and the accompanying advantages. It was found necessary, for a time, to provide for the physical nature as well as the mental and moral, and while the daily meal brought many hungry little ones inside the doors, others were kept away because the name "Soup School" was given it by some thoughtless scholars. This was a small matter compared with the difficulty of managing those who had never learned the first elements of self-control. As soon as the novelty of the new school wore off, many of the scholars amused themselves in annoying and shocking Superintendent and teachers. They were not prevented from swearing and fighting and drinking at home; why should these people, who had no legal right to lay their hands on them, prevent them from doing as they pleased? Often at Teacher's meetings was the question discussed whether or not some of the worst of the boys should be expelled; but this was never done. Perseverance brought its reward.

In speaking to one of the pioneers of the movement recently, we were told that such scenes are a thing of the past. This fact speaks for the civilizing effect of the gospel. Wherever the Bible goes, humanity rises to a higher plane of civilization. Christian missions, whether in the Sandwich Islands or the Second ward of Bridgeton follow parallel lines, all tending to improve mankind socially as well as spiritually.

Some of the children who attend the Mission School belong to families that are compelled to migrate frequently. Thus, the *personnel* is constantly changing. In the first five years of the school, the names of five hundred children were enrolled. Letters are occasionally received from old scholars who left little impress upon the teachers, but whose impressions of the school have been lasting.

A night school for week days is one of the features of this missionary enterprise. It is unfortunate that a municipality as progressive and enlightened as ours, does not provide instruction for those, who, by the force of circumstances, are prevented from attending day schools. Were it not for the Pearl Street Night School and one or two Night Schools supported by glass manufacturing corporations, many of the boys would reach manhood without even the rudiments of education. Our city, however, makes a small annual appropriation towards the expense of this branch of the work.

For about ten years, the Mission School was under the auspices of the Ladies' Union Mission Society of Bridge-ton, an association composed of ladies of all denominations. Since that time, without any effort from within or without, the work has gradually passed into the hands of our own denomination. This has added to the care and responsibility of the faithful Presbyterian women who have had charge of the work. The Sabbath School in past years was superintended by Mr. Theophilus Trenchard, and now by Mr. John M. Laning. It numbers about 150 scholars and 20 teachers. A song service, interspersed with short addresses, has been held Sunday evenings for years, and now a Sunday morning preaching service is regularly held, while the service on Sunday



evenings partakes more of the nature of a regular church service than formerly.

A prayer meeting is held every Tuesday evening, and a Society of Christian Endeavor and two classes of King's Daughters, meet weekly.

The reading and amusement room for working boys is an interesting feature of the winter's work. A room is provided, well lighted, warmed and stocked with games, illustrated papers, magazines and books. Boys are welcome here any night in the week. Practical talks are occasionally given in this room by their friends.

The sewing school for girls is a most valuable adjunct. It meets every Saturday afternoon during the winter and is largely attended. The work is systematized and classified, and the child can take her first stitches, and finally become expert in plain sewing. There are a number of helpers in this department, the scope of which may be imagined, when the preparation for one Saturday's sewing requires what would amount to fifty hours time of a single person.

A mother's meeting is regularly held, to which tired women come weekly, glad to leave for a time the monotony of household duties, to engage in Bible reading and religious instruction, and listen to encouraging talks from sympathizing teachers.

We might specify one good work after another which is being done on South Pearl street. The work has been growing for years. Many have been converted, hundreds have been made to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Converts that might have been in the Presbyterian Fold have connected themselves with other churches. God's blessing has attended the Pearl street Mission from its inception. The labors



of Phineas B. Kennedy, John M. Laning, Jr., and Frank Hort, within the last few years have been so stimulating, that a step forward was decided upon, and now it is the Fourth Presbyterian Church, under the pastoral care of Rev. Henry Reeves, the stated supply appointed by Presbytery. The church was organized on the 24th day of last May with eighteen members, since which time five new members have been added. Theodore F. Wurts was duly elected and installed an Elder, having served in that capacity in the Presbyterian Church of Atlantic City.

We cannot close this sketch of this mission enterprise without paying tribute to one whose name is woven into its history: I refer to Mrs. M. S. Fithian. The work was started by her word of invitation: she has given her time and energies to it for nearly a generation; she has lived to see her prayers, that it grow into a church, answered. She is still at the front with unchecked perseverance and enthusiasm. Her faith in a bright future for the Fourth Presbyterian Church is unwavering. Its future cannot be other than bright if the past rate of progression be continued.

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### HISTORY OF EAST BRIDGETON CHAPEL.

The history of East Bridgeton Chapel begins in 1886, when, through the efforts of our pastors, a Sunday School was organized, the first meeting being held October 31st at the residence of J. Howard Loper. Charles H. Pierson was the first Superintendent, and fifty-two members were enrolled. The following month, the Sessions of the three churches decided to erect a chapel. A lot was purchased at Commerce street and Coral avenue, and a building contracted for, which was completed and

dedicated early in July 1887. Dr. Brodhead assisted in this service which was believed to have been his last public ministration. The total cost of the lot, building and furniture was about \$1,900, \$1,300 of which has been raised, mainly by subscription, leaving a debt still against the property of \$600.

This locality has not been built up as rapidly as anticipated, but East Bridgeton Chapel is still holding its ground, and is proving a blessing to the neighborhood. Phineas B. Kennedy labored here for several months, and subsequently Henry W. Hathaway, a teacher at West Jersey Academy gave a portion of his time to the work. Since September, 1891, there has been no stated supply. Sabbath School is held every Sabbath afternoon, and meetings are held Sunday evenings, and once during the week, the Sunday morning preaching service being dispensed with. George J. Mayhew succeeded Charles H. Pierson as Superintendent of the Sunday School, and at present Mr. Albert Richmond acts in that capacity. The faithful few who regularly attend Sabbath School and evening meetings have been built up in their christian life and attest to the value of the work, which only requires permanent pastoral supervision to show still greater results.

You have seen in the souvenir programme, illustrations of the Pearl Street Mission and East Bridgeton Chapel, but to complete the picture gallery of our Presbyterian out-posts, we should have a view of the old canning factory out on Irving avenue, nearly two miles from here. A Sunday School was organized there the first Sabbath of this month with twenty-five members. Last Sabbath, the most oppressive of the year, there were fifty present.

The occupation of the factory is only temporary, and other quarters should be secured before cold weather. Twenty-seven members of our churches, in good and regular standing, have signed a petition to Presbytery to organize them into a church to be located at this point, and nearly \$2,000 has been subscribed toward a building.

When the arrangements for this day's celebration were being made, it was suggested that we erect a monument in this burial ground as a permanent memorial of this Centennial anniversary. If we are to have a permanent memorial, how much better than a cold piece of sculptured marble, with its suggestions of death, would be a Centennial Memorial Church, from which would go forth continually, the Gospel message, showing multitudes the way to Eternal Life.

**"Progressive Presbyterianism," by Mr. Robt. C. Ogden, Philadelphia.**

May a layman discuss it? Your invitation conveys the answer. A layman may discuss it, and of course you can only expect in this paper a plain layman's notions on what constitutes Progressive Presbyterianism.

The various branches of the Christian Church were born in great historic crises in the long past. This age does not produce sects. The Presbyterian Church was evolved from historic conditions which do not now exist, and few of us are members of this time-honored Church from any original convictions; we were simply born Presbyterians.

Occasionally there is an exception. My father was born a Baptist and became a Presbyterian by conviction. I owe a part of my Presbyterianism to some who came into the church by marriage. Family influences have put the vast majority of us into the Presbyterian Church. In this age, heredity almost invariably controls the attachments of the various Christians to their sects. Sectarian convictions are, therefore, subsequent and secondary.

These conditions demand that denominational bias should be controlled by the broadest Christian charity.

The prayer of Jesus, "That they may all be one: even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that Thou has sent Me;" and the teaching of St. Paul whose thought of the Church is that of a whole family in heaven and earth, combine in giving unity as the ideal of Christianity.

All denominationalism, therefore, is in conflict with the ideal, and until we have absolute divine authority

that our Church contains the complete, perfect and exclusive doctrine and government ordained by Jesus Christ, can we regard our Church as other than one means among many for the salvation of men. That we have such divine authority is not claimed or asserted.

The recognition of this fact underlies all consideration of progress. If we look at our Christianity through our Presbyterianism we merely support an ecclesiastical order and guard a system of dogma which is not claimed as essential to the salvation of men and is not demanded by the revealed word of God. To sustain these positions may be success, it is not progress.

That this language is not too strong is evident from the fact that our church, in its actions looking toward revision, does not regard the Confession as essential, and that it also admits the freedom of salvation through organizations that hold little in common with us save the recognition of Jesus of Nazareth as the Divine Saviour of men.

If, however, we look at our Presbyterianism through our Christianity the case is reversed. The point of view is vital. The accidents of life make us Presbyterian, but only personal experience can make us Christians. Our denomination may make us merely religious. There are vast masses of useless religion under many Christian names and forms, creeds and professions in the world. Christ personally known can make us godly. True Christianity and nothing else is godliness and, therefore, Presbyterianism is only in condition to be progressive when it is vitalized, transfigured, inspired, uplifted by the loving spirit of devotion to mankind, the simple and spiritual ethics, the grand courage, the abounding joy, the divine charity of the Master that she claims as leader and to whom she professes allegiance.

Our constant aim must be to test our personal lives and the current history of our church by the simple standards of the New Testament as we find them in the text. This every honest soul and average mind can do without reference to history or systems of man's device. We all know what the Master says; we become frightfully confused when we undertake to find out what somebody says he says. Much present trouble comes from allowing the latter to confuse the former. The Christ test is the only true test.

This being so, Progressive Presbyterianism will seek to divest itself of every weight. It has outgrown many things. The age of its peculiar protest is past and its history is secure. Presbyterians ought to study the history of their church. Large familiarity with the narrower period, when light and knowledge were less abundant and many things now non-essential were vital, will broaden the mind and perfect the judgment.

We hear much in these days about the study of Comparative Religion and the little light that filters through to the layman's narrow sphere from such great discussion, starts questions as to the Saviour's meaning in the remark "I have other sheep not of this fold." The deep research called for by such study is beyond most of us, but there is one study of comparative religion, that, if Christians, we must make, and it is the comparison between the religion of Jesus and his Apostles and the religion of our Presbyterian Church. All study of the history of our Church, all testing of its present position, all forecast of its future progress must be from that point of view. It is one of the glories, shall I not say the greatest glory of our organization, that it holds freedom of conscience as a God-given right to man upon which no

human dictum may be laid. Therefore the duty of trying the Spirits, finding the basis of belief, judging of Church polity is one which no Presbyterian Christian can honestly escape.

Nor should he desire to escape it. What one of us is there holding so low and small a standard of the self-respect involved in freedom of conscience and salvation through Jesus Christ as to willingly abdicate the principles of private judgment? Opinions held upon the dictum of other men, however great, are like second-hand clothes made for another. They are a misfit. Opinions so derived are not opinions, they are but the prejudices that underlie bigotry.

Our Presbyterianism rings true at one point at least. It makes a man a man—recognizes the touch of the divine mind. As a matter of fact it should destroy all sympathy with such sentiments as are expressed in the words

“Would he devote that sacred head  
For such a worm as I.”

That dear sacred head was not devoted to worms, but to grand moral beings made in the image of God and possessing a part of the divine nature.

Oh, ye theologians who explain so much, tell me the mystery of myself! I stand in awe and wonder as the scientific seeker for truth tells me of the star dust and of the wonders of the universe, and my mind reels with the thoughts of immensity. I stagger at the idea of eternity. to contemplate it too long would dethrone my reason; I hear the testimony of the rocks as the slight echoes of geology reach my unscientific ear, and turning from it all, look upon myself and my fellow-beings with larger awe, greater wonder and deeper emotion, for we have



moral natures, the power of doing right and wrong. To create us God has given us a part of himself.

As Presbyterians we need to realize that grandest of all thoughts. It has come into our church system pure, lustrous, radiant from the mind of God. When realized, it brings us into the divine harmony, and possesses the power of transfiguration, the same in essence and different only in degree from that which Peter and James and John witnessed when Moses and Elias talked with Jesus upon the mount.

The last analysis of every thing in religion is personal. Given this personal uplifting, possible to every individual, as taught and emphasized by the genius of our Church, and we will be completely progressive.

But as we look at the principles of our Christianity and our denomination, and compare them with facts, we turn sadly away and sigh and fold our hands, and moan over the degeneracy of the times. The ideal seems a long, long way off; and it will stay a long way off if we sit with Elijah under the Juniper tree, or sing in the minor key to the vibration of Jeremiah's harp under the willows. It was in the New Dispensation that Jesus said to His disciples under the *shadow of the cross*, "Your joy no man taketh from you." Of Jesus it was said that for the joy that was set before Him, He endured the cross.

A nation looks to the past for its Golden Age, but the Golden Age of Christianity is always in the future. Jesus lived and wrought upon an ideal. So must we.

You say all this is romantic. Yes, as the world goes it is romantic, as all beauty and perfection are romantic. But it is practical as well. Whither will it lead? That makes no difference. We must follow no matter where it leads.



Why is this question of Progressive Presbyterianism before us? Simply because we know that our Presbyterianism is somewhat lacking in true progress. We discuss it and try to find some light that will teach us how to make it better.

History repeats itself. The situation shows our ideal obscured by the traditions of the Elders; we find the titling of the mint, and the anise and the cummin to the neglect of the weightier matters; we find doctrinal loads; grievous to bear, fastened upon the shoulders of men. We find some churches bound together by social and financial, rather than by spiritual ties, the right to a place in which to listen to the Good News of Christ sold for a price, and many localities in which the poor have *not* the Gospel preached unto them. We find political methods frequently prevailing in the make up of the Church representation, and the raging bitterness of party strife often usurping the place and the power of the spirit of love.

History repeats itself. Like the soldiers of the Commonwealth, we must be iconoclastic; many an image must be shattered before our ideal can be put upon the upgrade toward realization. Like the Westminster Assembly, we must be constructive, replacing that which we destroy with something better.

Remember, please, this is a layman's talk, addressed particularly to laymen. What shall we plain, average working men do? A few practical suggestions are all that I will venture to present. Then I am done.

It is, I think, very needful that we have a clear conception of our Church. What is it to each one of us? In reply I would venture to intimate that it simply exists for the saving of men; to bring souls to the Saviour; to

be a means of grace for the upbuilding of Christians; to promote true faith in Jesus Christ, and, by the exercise of such graces of charity, sympathy, purity and benevolence as he enjoins, hasten the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. Therefore, all creed, doctrine and organization, all the offices pertaining to the sacred ministry, all the spiritual and material administration are subordinate to and created for that one grand, supreme object.

You say this is a trite platitude. Granted. But realize it and all things will fall into their true places, values of related things will appear, prejudices will no longer pose as principles, pride of power, vanity of opinion, and the whole cluster of personal belongings that seem so vital now will be lost in the Christ idea. I cannot see anything at stake in the existing divisions. The controversy is largely personal. The honest love of truth is too real from one extreme of the line to the other to endanger anything vital. The killing letter has possession of too many, and has led to vast intolerance. But through it all the Divine Word says it is the Spirit that maketh alive. It becomes a layman to be modest, but I cannot help thinking of the great picture by Hoffman in the Gallery of Dresden, in which the boy Christ is reasoning with the Doctors of the Law. *Let* history repeat itself. The Doctors of the Law have still something to learn from the same Christ. And I often think that many of these same Doctors of the Law might learn profitable lessons in our Sunday Schools.

The plain people of our Church see clearly many things that obstruct our progress. Most prominent is the contradiction between our polity and our doctrine. We claim liberty for the individual conscience. By that

liberty we cultivate sincere fellowship with other communions and make the conditions of Church membership so extremely simple that our Church is the most broadly catholic of all the evangelical bodies.

Over against this liberty and catholicity we have a system of doctrine which holds several statements that nobody believes, and much more that by common consent has no relation to the salvation of men. To the majority it confuses the thought of God and practically obscures the Christ.

We are sometimes told that we cannot be expected to understand it, but that it is perfectly clear as a scientific system to the theologian who has given a life time to its study. But every Elder and Deacon is expected to accept it, and they in common with the vast majority of the clergy must satisfy conscience by a private interpretation of the *system*.

The criticism is made that Presbyterians fail to assert the catholicity of their Church. But progress in that direction is barred and will be until scientific theology is put with other sciences in the schools of learning and our Church has a simple working, practical creed ample for Christianity.

The Rev. Dr. Patton has asserted in my hearing—I quote his exact words, “Presbyterianism does not so much ask what men believe as what they are.” And he is right as to the *true* genius of our beloved Church. If this be not true, what is to become of us? We laymen know nothing of criticism—higher, lower, or medium. We cannot defend the authority of our Bible on critical grounds; daily work consumes our lives. Are we to take our pill of theology made by doctors of divinity as we take the pill made by the doctor of medicine, knowing

nothing of its contents? Are we to accept the Bible as divinely inspired because other men say it is? Such blind following is not in harmony with our boasted liberty.

Let us be thankful that we are not left to such dire extremity, to such an unmanly basis for our beliefs. We have within easy reach the far higher and better testimony of experience, Use our Bible, find its wonderful fitness to human need, its perfect solution of all questions ethical, spiritual, social, and we each have experimental testimony that no man can either impart or destroy. Put our doctrinal statements in harmony with the best spiritual experience of the Church and we will be in a condition for progress. Only thus can our Church be truly catholic. Only thus can we command self-respect and stand squarely honest with the world.

There are several minor points deserving momentary consideration, in which progress is obstructed by existing conditions.

Prominent among them is our internal intolerance. Less tolerant to holders of divergent views within than to other Christians holding wider divergence without is too much the prevailing temper. I dismiss this subject with mere mention leaving the ungracious task of citing the abundant existing proof of the statement to such as may choose to seek it in the official acts, general discussion and current literature of our Church.

Progressive Presbyterianism demands thoughtful attention to the question of forms of worship. Many among us are bitterly opposed to ritual and yet are rigid ritualists, in stubborn devotion to existing form. The Presbyterian Church originally liturgical now needs an optional liturgy, varied, rich enough to meet any requirements of

worship. Not binding by law, but yet having the sanction of law.

Cognate to this question is that of the Hymn Book. Our Church has never had a proper authorized Hymnal. Fortunes have been made by editors and publishers who have been wise enough to supply our church's deficiency at this point. The worship of the Presbyterian Church needs to meet the best christian culture of the age. To assist in this truly devotional music is required, neither the bald leadership of a precentor nor the poor reflection of the operatic stage, but the rich, beautiful and worthy music of the church, both ancient and modern. Associated with proper music should be such poetry as best expresses the heart-life of Christianity. From the Hymn Book that is to be, doggerel, however pious, and all rhyme that is merely euphonious, should be excluded. From cover to cover it should be honest and free from editorial vandalism. Strange ethics prevail in much hymn book making. Men will look up to heaven reverently repeating "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor" and with no twinge of conscience will straightway proceed to garble a neighbor's hymn. Progress is wanted here.

Thus we have rapidly glanced over a few of the obstacles that oppose the progress of Presbyterianism. We have given some little attention to detail, but our thought has been directed more to the Spirit than to the letter of progress. Give us the true Spirit and our sanctified wills and strong right arms will find or will hew the path that leads at last to the light.

The true ideal of progress finds inspiration from the attainments of the past, but leaves the dead past to bury its dead. Other men's successes are no more potent to

save than other men's failures; each man, each age, each organism must work out its own destiny. Under this inevitable law the work of the Presbyterian Church must be done. The age is one of readjustment. Science is revealing mysteries and bringing forward facts that are making sad havoc with many notions of truth. That religion only is worthy of the name that welcomes all ascertained truth from whatever source it may come, and however it may shatter preconceived ideas. That faith only is worthy, that sees God everywhere, and believes that natural, equally with moral law, is the product of the divine thought. Science has wrung reluctant admission from religion to things proven. On the doctrinal side our Church is slow to find the right and follow it.

On the practical side we have been equally slow. With the most skillful putting of statistics it cannot be shown that the influences of our Church have kept abreast of the growth of population. We are tardy in our adaption to changed conditions. The materialistic standard is too much the Church standard; we are apt to be at ease in Zion. Let our critical sense be satisfied with service and sermon, and conscience lulled to sweet repose by moderate gifts to benevolence, and we translate our Gospel into pious bric-a-brac and think we are to be saved by taste.

Happily there is opposed to this a deep feeling of unrest. Men are questioning as to duty and duties. And while ecclesiastical authority is weakened in its hold there is a vast amount, more perhaps than ever before, of honest and earnest thinking about the problems of life and their solution.

And this makes the great opportunity for the Church. The problems of humanity are the problems of Christi-

anity, for only Christ has given the solution. The last decade of this century is to decide the relation of the Church to the world. The solemn question is what will the Presbyterian Church do in this crisis—for it is indeed a crisis? That's your question and mine.

Our system of organization is in a general way admirable, needing only a larger executive power, for all sorts of practical work. Our standard of Christian character is high, within our ranks is large intelligence, the impulse of the martyr spirit that seeks to find the line of duty and follow it to the end still lingers, the croaking fears that our Bible is discredited are groundless, these forces, and others like them are at our command.

American Presbyterianism halts to-day only for Christian Apostolic intelligent leadership. The question of its progress is merely a question of courageous fidelity to Christ and to Him alone.

I think I see the clouds breaking. The great heart of the Church is true, and wearying of strife is saying let us have peace, honorable peace, the plain truth of Christ is broad enough to hold all honest extremes of Christian scholarship, even though its statements be narrowed to the simplest requirements of salvation. It is true of the church as of the home.

"It is the heart and not the brain  
That to the highest doth attain,  
And he that followeth love's behest  
Far exceedeth all the rest "

A century hence another group will gather here, if Presbyterianism survive so long. And it will survive. What shall the verdict of posterity be upon what we do? Shall we pay our debt to the ages past? To posterity that debt is to be paid. Dare we, owing so much, leave our debts unpaid?

Ah, no! This age will not go into moral bankruptcy—it knows too well the love of Christ and will gladly pay its debt to Christianity.

And thus we have a good hope in the progressive future of Presbyterianism.



The Centennial Ode, Written by Mr. John  
Reeves, of Philadelphia, was Read  
by His Brother, James J.  
Reeves, Esq.

We sing of times one hundred years ago,  
Not far from where Cohansey waters flow,  
Where Nature's laws fair Bridge-town's sons obeyed,  
And monarchs were of all that they surveyed;  
When tallow candles and their flickering light  
Made visible the darkness of the night;  
When people rose at voice of early bird;—  
Children were seen, but not so often heard;  
Parents enforced the written Word of God,  
And felt how dangerous 'twas to 'spare the rod.'  
Not yet in bloom was "higher criticism;"  
Their only ism was the Catech ism.

Those pious souls, anticipating glory  
Oft to their little ones rehearsed the story  
Of man's first disobedience, and the Tree;—  
Its baleful fruit,—and the apostasy.  
They told of Noah's flood, ah, sad indeed!  
They told how Moses led the Chosen Seed;—  
Of Abraham, who lofty faith obtained;—  
Sarah his wife, who angels entertained;  
And how the Lord by hand of Gideon  
Defeated all the host of Midian;  
How David slew Goliath with a stone,  
And rose from Sheep-cote to the Jewish Throne;  
Of King Belshazzar and his overthrow;  
Of Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego;  
How Daniel from the wrath of kings and priests,  
Was saved alive, tho' in a den of beasts

They told of Bethlehem's star,—how, on the plain,  
The shepherds watched and saw the heavenly train  
That heralded the infant Saviour's birth,  
That brought good-will and peace upon the earth.

The Word of God was their supreme delight,  
In which they meditated day and night.

Their books were few, and very highly prized;  
 Good "Watts' Psalms and Hymns" they memorized,  
 The 'English Reader' and the 'Martyrs Book'  
 Adorned a shelf in many a household nook.  
 And when the Sabbath came, best day in seven,  
 The Pilgrim's Progress show'd the way to Heaven.

Few luxuries redeem'd their frugal meal;  
 They wove their garments on the spinning wheel.  
 And when the sun went down—on chilly night,  
 The open fireplace gave them warmth and light.  
 They took their foot stoves to the House of Prayer,  
 And if their feet were cold, they warmed them there.

They rear'd large families, those ancient dames,  
 Both boys and girls, and gave them scripture names  
 And when, at length, with zealous impulse thrilled,  
 They heard the voice of God—"Arise and build,"  
 The people promptly met the exigence;  
 Men of small means but large beneficence,  
 Poured freely forth their shillings and their pence;  
 While many pounds from heavier purses flowed,  
 And one Good "Friend" an ample lot bestowed.

God gave Trustees—The Elmers, Potter, Giles;—  
 Good, faithful stewards built the solid piles,  
 This lofty pulpit and these brick paved aisles.  
 God gave them ministers of sterling stuff;  
 He gave his people Kennedy, and Hoff;  
 Clarkson, and Freeman,—nor was this enough;—  
 He raised up Maxwell, Gregory, and Jones,  
 And Brodhead, and, with condescension owns  
 The words they spake with many prayers and tears  
 Along the pathway of these hundred years.  
 When I remember men of God,

Who yonder pulpit steps have trod,  
 My spirit humbly gladly owns,  
 How much I owe to Dr. Jones.

We venerate the man because  
 Of what he said, and what he was;

We listen'd to his reverent tones,  
And loved and honored Dr. Jones.

Whene'er the Sabbath day came round,  
His pulpit rang with doctrine sound;  
Milk, meat, and marrow from the bones,  
We all received from Doctor Jones.

Our fathers dwelt in sweet accord,  
Led honest lives and served the Lord;—  
True, valiant men, and never drones,  
Held up the hands of Doctor Jones.

We love the church—our father's name  
Is linked with her untarnished fame;  
Their sons take pleasure in her stones,  
For Zion's sake—and Doctor Jones'.

We hear our pastor, Mr. Beach,  
The same old, blessed Gospel preach,  
And sound abroad in fervid tones,  
The truths once taught by Doctor Jones.

When earthly toils and pains are past,  
May each and all of us at last,  
Forever free from sighs and moans,  
In Heaven's pure light, see Doctor Jones.

What shall we say of h's successor,  
The late lamented, wise Professor  
In Lincoln University—  
Dear Doctor Caspar Gregory?  
Firm, loyal to the truth, decided,  
Our dear young men he wisely guided  
And in their councils oft presided.

With wonderful vivacity,  
And musical capacity,  
He sought to make us meet to sing  
The praises of our Heavenly King.  
With blest revivals, rich, and free,  
God crowned his nine year's ministry.  
Good Doctor Maxwell next was sent,  
In whom were grace and wisdom blent,

Like Him who came from Heaven to earth,  
 He shared our griefs and joined our mirth.  
 With an indomitable zeal  
 He labored for the public weal.  
 In works abundant, self-denying;  
 And always preached to edifying.

Let Dr. Brodhead's name be known  
 For erudition not alone;  
 His bright example round us shone;  
 'Twas his to live from day to day  
 To brighten worlds, and lead the way.  
 The cause of Missions he promoted,  
 To which his life had been devoted.

Oh! why, to-day, should not our hearts rejoice  
 In this beloved Pastor of our choice?  
 A man of "faith unfeigned" and "apt to teach,"  
 A ' Bishop blameless"—temperate in his speech,  
 Our faithful Sylvester W. Beach.

With gratitude we ought to mention  
 What has been done for church extension  
 Within our borders,—where we see  
 Two branches from the Parent tree,  
 Our brother Beadle proudly stands  
 For Love and Truth in Gospel bands,  
 Meets well the duties of each hour;  
 Improves with age, and staying power;  
 Each Sabbath sees a happy throng  
 That 'crowd his gates with thankful song.'

The Providence of God has smiled  
 Upon our Church's younger child.  
 Her Temple is most beautiful,  
 Her loyal children—dutiful.  
 Her Pastor—on the roll of fame  
 Inscribe our Mr Bridges' name.

• Long may he live, and, in his place  
 Proclaim God's free and bounteous grace.  
 Within these walls, in many a high-backed seat,  
 Our predecessors held communion sweet,

Lifting their eyes toward the Heavenly place,  
Invoking blessings on their rising race.  
Pleading His Promises of Truth and Grace,  
They bow'd their souls, and humbly sought His face.  
This was the 'House of God' and here 'twas given  
To many souls to be the 'Gate of Heaven.'  
Oh! God of Bethel ! in each time of need,  
Our sons and daughters wilt Thou safely lead,  
And with supplies of Heavenly Manna feed,  
God of our Fathers, humbly, trustingly,  
Our Church's future would we leave with Thee.  
Let Strength and Wisdom on our sons descend,  
Thy perfect Beauty to our daughters lend,  
And crown them all with Glory at the end.

**The Remarks of Francis B. Reeves, of  
Philadelphia.**

"In a private letter, inviting me to this celebration, the occasion was spoken of as "The Centennial of Bridgeton Presbyterianism." It may not have been thought of the writer that the Presbyterianism of Bridgeton is a distant type of that article, but the expression suggests the question whether there are not such distinguishing characteristics in the Presbyterianism of this place as entitle it to special consideration, and all honor that may be accorded to it on this hundredth anniversary day.

"This at least may be said—that the Presbyterianism of Bridgeton is representative of the original and genuine, and that here may be witnessed a culture, growth and fruitage, under conditions altogether favorable, and therefore successful.

"And as it cannot be claimed that the church here has been built upon any other foundation than that which is common to the churches of our faith everywhere, the "Confession of Faith" and the "Shorter Catechism" being the common inheritance of the Presbyterian Church at large, we shall have to look for other than purely doctrinal causes to account for any apparent special blessings that have fallen upon Bridgeton Presbyterianism. We find them in the character and lives of the men and women whose names have been written here.

"The Master has honored this Church with consecrated instrumentalities for carrying forward His work. This vine of His planting has been fruitful, because men of rare spiritual endowment have watched and nurtured it in faith, with prayer. There has been faithful sowing, good seed, and good ground, conditions that inevitably lead to gracious results. This old Church is fairly repre-

sented in the 8th verse of the 13th chapter of St. Matthew's gospel, for have we not the record of her fruitage, sometime thirty fold, sometime sixty fold, and sometime an hundred fold?

"Of the husbandmen, the seed sowers, who have ministered to the generations of God's people here, you have heard or will hear much to-day. Some of us hold the treasures of a personal knowledge of half the century as a priceless legacy; and to some, a very few, to-day's historical recital will be the revival of happy recollections of two-thirds or three-fourths of that long period. To all these, come back to-day, blessed memories of a father or perhaps a mother, whose strong devotion, prudent counsel and Godly life upheld the hands and cheered the hearts of the shepherds of the flock. I speak no names; they are chiseled upon yonder blocks of marble; they are yet more deeply graven upon the tablets of our hearts.

"Naturally enough then, we have found in this church, where the seed sown has been the pure word of God, in its simplicity, no worthless cumbering weed-crop of a superstitious adhesion to mere human devices for propagating our holy religion, but a regularly recurring harvest of golden grain, the fruit of right believing and of well doing.

"Carried thence into homes, bright with God's praise, where the master loved to linger, in sacred hours when heaven and earth seemed to meet, these golden sheaves have been transformed into the very Bread of Life. And the children have been fed. 'These are they which, in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, kept it, and brought forth fruit with patience.'

"If I am asked for the secret of the power of this time honored Church, I shall say it is the Church in the home,

the Bible in the family, the Shorter Catechism and "Psalms and Hymns" by the fireside. I speak not as a theorist but from experience when I tell of the clearness and forcibleness of a father's inculcation of the essential principles of the law of God, in a family where none thought of pleading either youth or age as an excuse for not submitting to the regular weekly examination in the Shorter Catechism; in a home where the Sabbath was sanctified by a Holy resting all that day, even from such worldly employments and recreations as were lawful on other days, and where all its hours were spent in the public and private exercises of God's worship, except so much as was taken up in works of necessity and mercy.

"A great company of witnesses can thus testify of the power of the Gospel of Christ as it has been preached here through all these years. Other Christian churches, bearing different names, have wrought grandly, and have every right to bear the palms of victory and crowns of glory with the Presbyterians, but ever these, our brethren, will, I believe, bear cheerful testimony to the beneficent influence of this old church, not only within the bounds of her own communion, but upon the entire community and upon the character and upon the very name of Bridgeton."



**From Absent Friends. Kindly Words or  
Greetings Sent to the Centennial.**

Many letters of deep interest, full of kindly greeting and expressing regret that the writers were unable to be present, were received from absent friends. It was not possible to read all of them at the celebration, because of a lack of time, but the greater part of them were heard, and they formed a feature of the celebration which was especially pleasing to the vast throng of listeners:

FROM DR. S. BEACH JONES.

S. Beach Jones, M. D., wrote from Nahant, Massachusetts, July 16th:

"Please accept from my brother Chester and myself our very sincere thanks for the kind invitation to be present at the Centennial Celebration to take place on the 26th. Unfortunately it will be impossible for us to do so, as Chester and I leave here for Canada next Monday, and my brother Ralston writes me that he is extremely busy at this time. Will you express to the committee our appreciation of their courteous invitation."

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FROM REV. JOS. W. HUBBARD.

Rev. Joseph W. Hubbard, once pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church, wrote as follows:

"My Dear Friends of Other Days—I borrow another voice while I make my *impromptu speech*.

"It is more than thirty-five years since I entered into the labors of Revs. H. J. VanDyke and Wm. E. Baker and Peter B. Heroy, and became for eight years a small part of the Presbyterianism of Bridgeton.

"I used to think the Second Church a healthy place for pastors, as none ever died there. My patriarchal successor knows a good thing when he sees it. Having

struck a healthy work he is like the son of Erin who said; 'If I only knew a place where they never died I would go there to end my days.' If Bro. B. ever resigns I shall know he is tired of life.

"O, the golden days of the long ago, happy with such pleasant surroundings.

"We were happy in *ministerial surroundings*—Father Osborn, just ready to fall asleep; Dr. Kollock, Dr. Jones, Dr. Janvier, the ubiquitous Allen H. Brown, who could cover West Jersey and spare enough to lap over the rest of the State, and the saintly Stratton, and the younger brethren, Shields and Davis and Stewart and Gregory, and a score of others whom I see to-day.

"What a good old home was this for the boys who had gone out from our neighborhood to the Master's work !

"And how nice for the pastors, and doubly nice for the people, when they filled the old pulpits. There were the Strattons, three, and the Westcotts, and the Joneses, and the Reeveses, and the Jameses, and Whitar, and Husted, and Burt, and J. Howard Nixon, and I don't know how many more.

"Happy were we in our surroundings. The fathers who have fallen asleep—shall we ever see their like again ?

"They were grand old dyed-in-the-wool Presbyterians.

"Happy were we with the young men and the boys.

"Some have fallen at their tasks. Some went forth and died that their country might not perish. Some are standing in their lot to-day, fit representatives of their fathers and fit exponents of the Presbyterianism which made this town and marked the State.

"May another centennial find the same loyal names and spirits perpetuated.

"Long since passed the day when the great congregation came hither to worship. But how often have we paused here and then trodden the narrow streets of this ever growing city of the dead, as we laid down the beloved dust to wait the Saviour's call.

"I greet you all to-day on this spot where we have so many kindred ties.

"If on the resurrection morn there shall be a pause for retrospection, it seems to me that the reunited bodies and spirits we have loved so tenderly will pause a moment to bless God for such an earthly name, and such a hallowed resting-place."

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FROM MAYOR STUART.

Mayor Edwin S. Stuart, of Philadelphia, wrote as follows, under date of July 20th:

"I sincerely regret my inability to accept your kind invitation to be present at the One Hundredth Anniversary of the laying of the corner stone of the Presbyterian Church at Bridgeton, N. J., owing to a number of official engagements for the 26th inst., which will prevent my absence from the city.

"Your church is to be congratulated on having preserved its vitality through so long a period, and I trust that the second century of its existence will be marked by a greater degree of prosperity, and that its work for the good of the community will not be hampered or checked in any manner."

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FROM CONGRESSMAN BERGEN.

Congressman Christopher A. Bergen wrote from the House of Representatives, at Washington, as follows:

"Your very kind invitation to be present at the one

hundredth anniversary of the laying of the corner stone of the Presbyterian Church in Bridgeton, came to hand, and I had hoped to be able to be present with you at the time. I now find that my public duties will prevent. I regret this the more because reared in that faith I enjoy every monument of its perpetuity. Thanking you for my invitation, with renewed assurance I remain," &c.

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FROM REV. DR. WM. H. JAMES.

From Spring Dale, Ohio, came the following extremely interesting epistle from Rev. Dr. William H. James:

"I have received a kind invitation to attend a Centennial Celebration to be held in Bridgeton, New Jersey, on the 26th of this month, in connection with the old Broad Street Presbyterian Church. It would afford me much pleasure to be present, but on account of the fact that I have just returned from a visit of two months on the Pacific coast, I shall be unable to do so.

"On the 11th day of December, 1849, I went to Bridgeton to live. The next Sabbath after my arrival I went to the Sabbath School which was held in the upper part of the session house or lecture room, when it stood on the corner of the street. I entered the class taught by Mr. Joseph Reeves, and remained in it for some years. Hon. L. Q. C. Elmer was the Superintendent at that time.

"On the 8th day of March, 1853, I united with the First Church on profession of faith under the ministration of Rev. S. B. Jones, D. D. Not very long after this I was invited to teach a Sunday School class which was held in the old Broad Street Presbyterian Church. Hon. John T. Nixon was the Superintendent. I well remember the emotion with which I was filled when he asked

me to take a class in his school. I was but a youth, and had never taught a class up to this time. He gave me a class of very small children. It was composed of the second and third sons of Dr. Wm. Elmer, Sr., the son of Mr. Charles Elmer, the older son of Mr. Wm. G. Nixon and Ed. Fithian. I was delighted with my class, and I think I never had a class that has done better in life, or has developed more true manliness than that class has done, from all I have been able to hear.

"In the fall of 1856, in the month of September, I left Bridgeton to enter upon study for the gospel ministry. This occupied nine solid years of my life. I graduated from Princeton Seminary in the spring of 1865 and was at once invited to be the assistant pastor of Rev. N. C. Burt, D. D., in the Seventh Presbyterian Church, Cincinnati. (Dr. Burt's early home was in Fairton, New Jersey.)

"In the year 1866, July 29th, I entered upon my work in the church where I now labor. Next Sabbath week will complete twenty-six years of my pastorate here. Last year the 25th anniversary was celebrated in the church. You will find an account of it enclosed.

"I wonder if any other person who taught in the old Broad Street Sunday School in 1845 is now living?

"As you will be recording the history of early times I will tell you how far my memory goes back. I can distinctly remember Rev. Ethan Osborn as he stood in the pulpit in the Presbyterian Church at Deerfield one Sabbath in my early childhood. I remember Mr. Janvier who was the pastor of the Presbyterian church at Pittsgrove. I remember Rev. Mr. Helm of Salem, Rev. S. K. Kollock, of Greenwich, and also Rev. I. W. E. Kerr, who was afterward pastor of the same church.

"I hope you will have a pleasant and enjoyable time and that you will send me an account of the proceedings that I may also rejoice with you all."

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FROM REV. DR. JOSEPH B. STRATTON.

From way off in Natchez, Mississippi, the mails brought to the Corresponding Secretary, Mr. James J. Reeves, this beautiful letter from Rev. Dr. Joseph B. Stratton, so well known in this the home of his younger days :

"I cannot tell you how my heart strings throbbed in response to your call. It is with sincere and profound regret that I have to conclude that I cannot participate with you in the enjoyments and benefits of this most interesting centennial.

"There are few objects belonging to my native town that are more distinctly engraved upon my memory than is this dear old church. I can see everything included in its architecture and furniture, and everybody who used to fill its seats or be concerned in its exercises, with the vividness of literal vision.

"I can recall the venerable form of Mr. Freeman as it used to appear above the pulpit when he rose to commence worship. I remember the old precentors who led the music, and then the choir who succeeded them. I can see Elder Enoch Moore going up to the pulpit with a Bible and hymn book in his hands, when the minister was absent, to conduct service for the congregation.

"To my young imagination it somehow seemed as if the holy place were peopled with angels, and I am sure now, as I recall it to view and yield my mind to the associations with which it is filled, I may say it is peopled with angels still.

"The first sermon I can remember, was one preached

in that church by good old Mr. Samuel Lawrence, on the Parable of the Prodigal Son. Perhaps the seed sown then, in a child's heart lived and helped to bring a prodigal home in subsequent years.

"When the new church was dedicated in 1836, I was present and recollect the impressive sermon of Dr. John Breckenridge. Rev. Samuel G. Winchester, then pastor of a church in Philadelphia, was in attendance also on the occasion, and preached a sermon at night, which to my mind and that of Henry T. Ellett, who was sitting with me had ponderous power. Mr. Winchester subsequently accepted a call to the church at Natchez and served it for the last three years of his life. How little I, an ambitious young law student then dreamed that the time would come when I should be his successor as the pastor of the church in this distant Southern city.

"I must stop these reminiscences or I shall grow heart sick at the necessity, Providential as it clearly seems, which forbids me to be with you. Your letter brought to my mind some lines which I once (in 1837) wrote in the album of a lady who resided some years in Bridgeton and was subsequently married and lived in the State of New York, depicting some of the scenes and objects about the old place, which we had both loved. She sent me a copy of them long years after I had been settled at Natchez. They are nothing but juvenile verses, but show the veneration of a young heart for the old sanctuary. (If your letter had not thrown me into rather a gushing mood I should never have thought of transcribing them.) I extract from the effusion the following:

Here midst these oaks, whose spreading limbs  
For years have echoed with the hymns  
Of pious praise, the Church, scarce seen

Through the dark leaves' surrounding green,  
 Its ancient pile uprears. No spot  
 That zeal e'er chose, no cell or grot  
 Of monkish days, seemed better formed  
 To lead the soul, devotion-warmed,  
 From this low world to things above !  
 For here, within this peaceful grove,  
 The sound of toil, the busy hum  
 Of wordly tumults never come.  
 But ceaseless Silence reigns around  
 And clothes with awe the sacred ground.  
 How oft upon this tranquil air  
 The song of praise hath sweetly broke !  
 How oft a pastor's fervent prayer  
 In pleading accents here hath spoke !  
 Along these walks, within these aisles,  
 For years the village fathers trod;  
 And winter's storms, or summer's smiles,  
 Ne'er stole one Sabbath from their God.  
 Alas ! how changed the prospect now.  
 Within those walls no longer bow  
 That reverent crowd ! Along these walks  
 With fearless step the wild bird stalks !  
 Amidst these trees no echo wakes,  
 No solemn strain their silence breaks;  
 But crowd, hymn and prayer are gone,  
 And Nature worships here along.

"Excuse me for this long letter," concluded Dr. Stratton, and remember that in writing it I have been a boy again."

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#### GEORGE W. CHILDS.

In behalf of Mr. George W. Childs, the proprietor of that great journal, the *Public Ledger*, Mr. Addison Bancroft wrote a letter from which the following extracts are made:



"It would give Mr. Childs great pleasure to be present at the celebration of the centennial of Presbyterianism in Bridgeton, but he finds so many duties pressing upon him just now that he is compelled to forego this pleasure.

"A visit to Bridgeton and the old Presbyterian Church cemetery would revive in memory some very precious associations of the past. He was long acquainted with Rev. Dr. Jones during his pastorate in Bridgeton and always enjoyed the Doctor's frequent visits at his office in Philadelphia.

"Wm. G. Shannon was a young man, clerk in a large importing house in Philadelphia and one of Mr. Childs', as well as my own very early acquaintances in Philadelphia. Young Shannon connected himself with the Presbyterian church and became one of the most earnest, faithful Christian young men in Philadelphia. His health failed, he visited the South to spend the winter with friends, where he died thirty-eight years ago. He was buried at Bridgeton. Mr. Childs proposed at once the erection of a monument. With his contribution together with those of Mr. Shannon's employers and other friends, it was accomplished. This was only a beginning with Mr. Childs, as he has since been erecting monuments (not all in marble) all over our land and in several other lands.

Mr. Childs is now, through family connections, identified with the Episcopal. His earlier associations for many years were with the Presbyterians. \* \* \* Thus after being so thoroughly schooled under Presbyterian influence we may very safely trust him to the care of other denominations.

"He is acquainted with your Elder Reeves' sons, and several other families long resident in Philadelphia,

representing Bridgeton's sons, have given him a very decided impression in favor of Bridgeton Presbyterianism.

"I have been among our business men in Philadelphia for the past 50 years. I have often remarked that Bridgeton, to my knowledge and acquaintance, has sent forth in business and professional walks of life, more young men carrying with them a consistent Christian influence than any other town I have ever known.

"May the remembrance of those who have gone before and the blessed associations with which you will be surrounded on the twenty-sixth, give you all a fresh inspiration and a strong impulse to continue in the great work which the Lord has given you to do, winning souls for Christ "

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FROM REV. WM. H. BELDEN.

From Rev. Wm. H. Belden, formerly of the West Church, came the subjoined letter. "Clifton Springs, New York, June 23," was the date line:

"I thank you heartily for your invitation to the Bridgeton Presbyterian Centennial, which, however, my health will not allow of my accepting. "I am accustomed to think of the transmission of the Christian witness by means of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, from generation to generation, as similar to that familiar scene in civil courts where reputable persons, subpœnaed to prove a case, depose that to the best of their knowledge and belief, the story of Jesus Christ is true. It has been the supreme external evidence upon which Christendom has rested its case for these nineteen hundred years. Your centennial festival of Tuesday will repeat the evidence of this testimony as made and continued for a hundred years past in our own town. To recount such a history

is a grateful task indeed. I hope that the privilege may seem great and fruitful to you all."

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FROM REV. EPHER WHITAKER:

Under date of July 19, Rev. Epher Whitaker sent a communication from Southold, N. Y., from which we make an extract:

The celebration itself accords with my taste and my judgment of its desirableness. It would delight me to be present if my duties at home would permit. Unhappily they will not. I beg to send my congratulations in view of the history of the century, and my best wishes for time to come.

"I have reason to be extremely thankful for the history which you review. There will not be an hundred persons present whose worship in the Broad Street Church began at a remoter point of time than my own. My earliest recollections of public worship are associated with two places only: the old stone church of Fairfield and the Broad street church of Bridgeton. The former edifice is but fifteen years older than the latter. My worship in the Broad Street Church began early in the year 1826. \* \* \* While my indebtedness to Elder Francis G. Brewster is immeasurable, the benign influence of the Broad Street Church, as well as that of the Second Church, upon my character and course has not ceased. Doubtless it will continue forever. My grateful recollections will therefore be with you during the celebration."

**Impromptu Remarks by Visitors.**

In the morning Rev. C. A. R. Janvier, lately returned from India, Rev. Dr. Rollin A. Sawyer, of the New York *Evangelist*, and the aged Hon. Jonathan Ogden were among the speakers. The words of the latter are here given in full:

“On the fifth day of September in the year 1831, I left my village home of less than two thousand inhabitants, in Bridgeton. An inconspicuous event in itself, but of profound importance to the party of the first part. Two generations of men have come and gone since that day, with all their hopes, fears and anticipations. To be permitted to revisit it after so long an interval, and under the circumstances and surroundings of this Centennial Celebration, with all that it implies, is a culmination in a single life to stir the blood and quicken the pulses of even eighty-two and a half years.

“It is a marvel to find the village grown into a city of over 12,000 inhabitants, retaining its primeval attachment to all that was true and good in its early history. Morality and Religion, keeping pace with progress and expansion, in the directions of education, culture and refinement, in such a manner, as to make its sons feel, wherever they may be, that it is an honor to have been born there. The honor (or otherwise) in my own case, belongs to Fairton, an unpretentious town, as you all know, about four miles south on the Cohansey river.

“My personal acquaintance with the people of the city is almost gone. Judge Woodruff who has recently died, was the last of my old school fellows and a better boy. I had planned to have him visit me last year but was not able to accomplish it, much to my regret.

“The mute memorials of this celebration, its holy asso-

ciations and blessed memories. The human eye over the pulpit which has been an object lesson all my life. The adjacent cemetery, which covers so much of the active life I knew so well, and whose closed careers, emphasize the fact that

“Only the memories of the just  
Grow sweet and blossom in the dust.”

“These all to me are matters of intense interest and delight. I can re-people many of the pews, above and below, with faces and forms long gone but well remembered. The histories of many lives are still fresh and vivid, and will be, until the curtain of memory falls, and all is over.”

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A number of the singers belonged some years ago to the choir of the First Church, even as far back as Dr. Jones' day. The roster of the Centennial Choir was as follows:

Mrs. Albert Parvin, Mrs. John R. Graham, Miss Emily Fithian, Miss Tillie Mulford, Mrs. Charles E. Mulford, Mrs. Wm. E. Potter, Mrs. M. G. Porter, Mrs. L. H. Dowdney, Mrs. Robert DuBois, Miss Sallie M. Riley, Prof. C. Morton, Mr. Robert DuBois, Mrs. Laura Gahre, Mrs. H. A. Jorden, Mrs. E. M. Fithian, Mrs. F. R. Fithian, Mrs. P. K. Reeves, Miss Rie M. Whitaker, Miss Julia Maul, Miss Eleanor Maul, Miss Isolene Lang, Miss Louisa Rynick, Miss Anna Lang, Mrs. Charles E. Bellows, Mr. Thomas Donaghay, Mr. Robert N. Husted, Mrs. Robert N. Husted, Mr. Robert L. Young, Mr. Wm. A. Shull, Mr. Charles F. Reeves, Miss C. B. Bowen, Miss Lizzie A. Whitaker, Mrs. Theodore Edwards, Miss Annie R. Reeves, Mrs. J. E. Kirk, Misses Hattie Shoemaker, Mary Rocap, Lucy Hewitt, Gertrude Moore,

Lizzie Irelan, Mary Elmer, Mr. W. E. Riley, Mr. Charles B. Moore, Mr. Thomas H. Woodruff, Miss Harriet D. F. Reeves, Miss Mary F. Reeves, Mrs. Charles F. Reeves, Mrs. F. M. Porch, Mrs. S. W. Beach, Mrs. T. R. Janvier, Mrs. C. J. Buck, Mrs. J. L. Robeson, Messrs. F. M. Porch, Charles E. Mulford, Dayton Frederick, David C. Jones, Misses Mary Shoemaker, Anna Nicholson, Mrs. Jonathan Elmer, Miss Mary Minch, Messrs. J. L. Robeson and P. Kennedy Reeves.

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